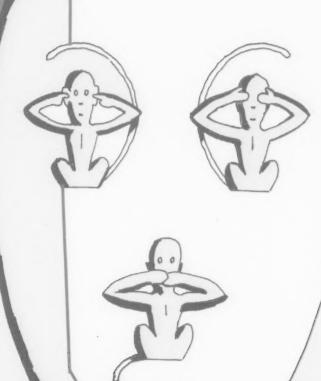
34

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW MAY/JUNE 2000 \$4.95/CANADA \$5.95 TRIBUNE BEAMS AHEAD

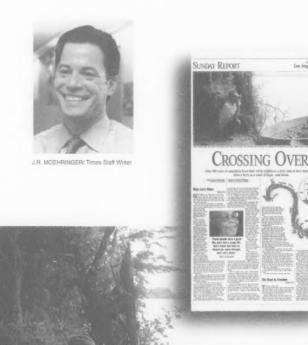


THE TRUTH ABOUT SELF-CENSORSHIP

HIGAN UNIV

#BXBFBFB ************** MIXED ADC 050 #48197EST000PR009# JRCL 246

He showed us how wide a narrow river can be.



CLARENCE WILLIAMS/ Times Staff Photographer

The Los Angeles Times congratulates J.R. Moehringer on winning the Pulitzer Prize for Feature Writing — the 24th Pulitzer for the L.A. Times. His Sunday Report, "Crossing Over," introduced our readers and the world to the people of Gee's Bend, Alabama. He showed why, after 180 years of separation from their white neighbors, a stoic community of slave descendants viewed a promised ferry service across the Alabama River with both hope and doom.



The Bridge at No Gun Ri

It was a story no one wanted to hear: Early in the Korean War, villagers said, American soldiers machine-gunned hundreds of helpless civilians, under a railroad bridge in the South Korean countryside.

When the families spoke out, seeking redress, they met only rejection and denial, from the U.S. military and their own government in Seoul. Now a dozen ex-GIs have spoken, too, and support their story with haunting memories from a "forgotten" war. ...

AP Wins Pulitzer Prize

For Investigative Reporting



Sang-Hun Choe



Charles J. Hanley



Martha Mendoza



Randy Herschaft

The story of "The Bridge at No Gun Ri," winner of the 2000 Pulitzer Prize for investigative reporting, uncovered allegations that for nearly 50 years had gone unreported and cast new light on an old war. This award brings to 46 the number of Pulitzer Prizes won by the staff of The Associated Press.

Congratulations to the AP's No Gun Ri team, and to the dozens of other staff members who contributed to the project – colleagues at APTN, the AP Broadcast News Center, Photos, Graphics and Multimedia who pulled the material together on The WIRE, where it can still be seen: http://wire.ap.org/APpackages/nogunri/

Congratulations also to the AP's Moscow staff, Pulitzer finalists in International Reporting for "skillful and courageous coverage of the Russian attack on Chechnya."



MAY/JUNE 2000

"To assess the performance of journalism . . . to help stimulate continuing improvement in the profession, and to speak out for what is right, fair, and decent" -From the founding editorial, 1961

GENEVA OVERHOLSER How about a trust fund for better journalism? MARIA CRISTINA CABALLERO In Colombia, journalism is more than just reporting facts. MARSHALL LOEB 68 Maxim is both a marvel and a menace. LAWRENCE K. GROSSMAN 70 Should exit polls be withheld from voters? JAMES LEDBETTER 71 Exit polls are an old vs. new media issue. ROBERT HOOD 73 Why low-wage newspapers are paying a price.

BOOK REVIEW



THE CHIEF	7
A new biography of	
William Randolph Hearst,	
Reviewed by Richard Norton	Smith
	1.0
BOOK REPORTS	7

by James Boylan

ARTICIF

THE TRUTH ABOUT SELF-CENSORSHIP A new survey, commissioned especially for the Columbia Journalism Review, finds widespread

self-censorship among journalists. Andrew Kohut reports on the survey's results. 42 Trudy Lieberman explores self-censorship's many varieties. 44 Tracy McNamara tells of ways to fight back. 49

Lowell Bergman offers a personal view.

THE TRIBUNE MERGER AND THE FUTURE

The life and death of Times Mirror, by David Laventhol 16 Tribune beams toward a multimedia future, by Neil Hickey 18 24 In Tampa, the future is now, by Aly Colón

PUBLISHERS AND EDITORS

A publisher's life: Reid Ashe of the Tampa Tribune 29 The most important relationship, by Brent Cunningham 37

EXPERT WITNESS

38 Myths and facts in the coverage of world trade: Robert E. Litan, Brookings Institution, and Jeff Faux, Economic Policy Institute

LOVE THOSE OPTIONS

Stock options are increasingly becoming part of the compensation package for journalists. That's a good thing, but is it the right thing? by Anne Colamosca. Options fever in Hartford, by Dan Haar 54

THE MIAMI SOLUTION

The Miami Herald has a tough competitor, its own Spanish-language 56 edition, El Nuevo Herald, by Mike Clary.

LETTERS EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY LIBRARY/PERIODICALS COUNTERPOINT 6 **CURRENTS** 8 MAY 16 2000 **DARTS & LAURELS** 13 LISTS 60 THE LOWER CASE 81

2

CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR 6 PEABODY ANARD WITH RS.

A LESSON BEFORE DYING

DARE TO COMPETE: THE STRUGGLE OF WOMEN IN SPORTS
FISTS OF FREEDOM: THE STORY OF THE '68 SUMMER GAMES
GOOD NIGHT MOON & OTHER SLEEPYTIME TALES
THE SOPRANOS

AND OUR OWN SHEILA NEVINS PERSONAL AWARD HONOREE

HEO

CIR

Published by the Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism Dean: Tom Goldstein

PUBLISHER AND EDITORIAL DIRECTOR: David Laventhol

MANAGING EDITOR: Gloria Cooper

SENIOR EDITOR: Mike Hoyt

EDITOR AT LARGE: Neil Hickey

ART DIRECTOR: Nancy Novick

ASSISTANT EDITORS: Brent Cunningham, Tracy McNamara

EDITORIAL/PRODUCTION: Tom O'Neill

INTERNS: Aparna Surendran Laura Hertzfeld

ASSOCIATE PUBLISHER: Dennis F, Giza ADVERTISING DIRECTOR: Louisa D. Kearney

BUSINESS ASSISTANT: Kathleen Brow

CONSULTANT: Samuel E. Schulman

ONLINE PRODUCER: Peter Leonard

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:

James Boylan, Christopher Hanson, Trudy Lieberman, Michael Massing, Bruce Porter, Bruce Selcraig, Alvin Shuster, Steve Weinberg, Barry Yeoman

EDITORIAL ADVISERS

Philip S. Balboni, Jim Carey, Phyllis Malamud Clark, Barbara Cochran, Robert Curvin, Arthur Gelb, Alex Jones, Jonathan Z. Larsen, John Leo, Janice C. Simpson, Sally Bedell Smith, Judy Woodruff

CJR is a member of The Leadership Network (212) 375-1575

MAJOR DONORS

The Ford Foundation
The Knight Foundation
DONORS

Cabot Family Charitable Trust The MacArthur Foundation

TO CONTACT US:

Editorial: (212) 854-1881 Advertising: (212) 854-3958 Business: (212) 854-2716 Subscriptions: (888) 425-7782 Fax: (212) 854-8580 e-mail: CIR@columbia.edu

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

Journalism Building 2950 Broadway Columbia University New York, N.Y. 10027

On the Web: www.cjr.org

LETTERS

THOSE BLOOMING CRITICS

Despite your modesty, you are still, I believe, our most prestigious critic of the media. If there was a conflict of interest in your project on media criticism ("A Thousand Voices Bloom," CJR, March/April) you were surely more than fair in

judging your competitors. But on what basis? You chose as guest judge to appraise, and praise, Brill's Content, one Michael Gartner, the former head of NBC News who enthusiastically

supported the Pentagon's management of the news during the Persian Gulf war, when other major media were protesting it. And you toss a bouquet at Ken Auletta, who sits at The New Yorker where A.J. Liebling used to scorch the wayward press. During the great corruption scandals in New York in the late 1970s, Auletta was defending politicians against "zealous prosecutors who would indict them for 'crimes' they do not understand" and "journalists who confuse customs with corruption." I've read nothing since to indicate he has changed his outlook. This, you say, is a media critic who "Gets the Big Picture."

I think we are always missing the big picture. Our critics will never have enough time and space to cover all our serious errors.

> JOHN L. HESS New York Times reporter, 1954-78 New York, New York

At the risk of this being the most solipsistic letter in media history, CJR's rundown of media critics made a minor

mistake about me. I have not written signed editorials for *The Nation* on the media for nearly two years. I write a column, appearing every other week, dealing with the media. culture, and politics, entitled "Full Court Press," that can be found on the magazine Web site at http://www.thenation.com/print/alterman. I also dis-

pute the notion of anyone's work deriving from a "distinctly *Nation* point of view" as the magazine, like any good one, is a house of many mansions.

ERIC ALTERMAN New York, New York

I deeply appreciate Michael Gartner's flattering assessment of our magazine in your recent issue.

Gartner spent a lot of time in the piece speculating about the conflicts of interest related to Contentville, a new online venture involving three media companies and a company that is affiliated with our magazine. That's fair. But how come in your story about your own magazine you never note the direct conflict of interest that plays out every day in every issue - your magazine's constant solicitation and receipt of donations from all the major news organizations that the magazine writes about?

I get those solicitations all the time and I contribute to the charity breakfasts the imagazine runs. Why didn't you disclose that in the flattering article about me? And the major news organizations are major sustaining contributors, always being asked and often anteing up. Now there's a real conflict.

STEVEN BRILL Chairman and c.e.o. Brill's Content New York, New York The editors reply:

The Columbia Journalism Review solicits funds only from nonprofit foundations and interested individuals, not from major news organizations or others that we cover. Brill may be confusing CJR with the Columbia journalism school, which does solicit funds for a variety of activities, including the First Amendment breakfasts in New York City.

I have just read David Hall's fair-minded critique of the American Journalism Review. Not knowing Hall, I found it humorous but couldn't decide whether his continued references to "the reporter," an anonymous figure who left L.A. Times editors Nick Williams and Bill Thomas out of the story "Paradise Lost?," was the product of covness, tit-fortat, or some unknown (to me) literary mechanism. I think so much of Williams and Thomas, and happen to be "the reporter," that I want to make several points as clear as possible for their sake and mine. One is elemental to our craft: because the Staples matter landed on top of my story at precisely the time of its deadline, half the names in the story ended up on the cuttingroom floor in the chaotic final editing process. The names of these two great editors never should have been among those and I apologize to them particularly to Thomas, who was of immeasurable help in putting the story together. I don't believe I ever implied or wrote that Otis Chandler "made" the Times by himself but instead that he went out and found the best possible people. Still, perhaps the most important point is this: "Paradise Lost?"was never intended to be the oft-told story of their shining era. This story spanned the decade of duress that followed them - beginning with the stresses on the Times during the deep end-ofcold-war Southern California recession and concluding with the Willes era. I wrote a mere 21,000 words. To do justice to the full story of the Times would take 100,000-plus. Plus quite a few. And hard covers.

> WILLIAM PROCHNAU Washington, D.C.

While your segment on newspaper ombudsmen succeeds in making the readers feel good about these inhouse critics, your upbeat stance fails to note where these individuals fall short. I have in mind, particularly, two ombudsmen recently on the staff of The Washington Post — Geneva Overholser and E.R. Shipp, the current appointment.

Overholser and Shipp, while appearing to be doing a competent job, have conveniently overlooked certain sections of the paper that desperately need to be scrutinized. Neither critic has touched the bland, weak oped section and, likewise, the excesses of the Style section. The most glaring oversight of these two ombudsmen has been the sports section, which is plagued by dull, predictable columns and blatant cheerleading by its reporters. One wonders if Overholser or Shipp have ever bothered to read the Post sports section.

What this suggests to me is that a paid ombudsman on any given newspaper is nothing more than window-dressing. It's a dishonest type of appointment and, in my opinion, the hypocrisy should and could be eliminated by all newspapers by abandoning the pretense.

> BURLING LOWREY Free-lance writer Washington, D.C.

SAY IT ISN'T SO

As a journalism student at Central Michigan University, I was shocked to see the results of your poll about quotes ("Don't Touch That Quote," CJR, January/February). I do not agree that quoting from memory is acceptable under any circumstances, and I was appalled to see that such a large percentage of journalists do. I can only hope that as I enter this industry, I will not pick up the bad habits and unacceptable practices mentioned in this article.

AMY C. JOLES Gagetown, Michigan

HOT SUBJECT

In "Covering the Climate: Beware of False Conflict" (CJR, March/April), a most startling statement came from the interviewee, Prof. John M. Wallace: "By exempting themselves from the requirement to report both sides of the story in every article (as if both sides always existed and were equally worthy of consideration), they are assuming more personal responsibility for providing balanced news coverage." It was disappointing to find that interviewer Frank Houston accepts this "blinders are balance" proposition without blinking.

In the article, Wallace grossly misstated the controversial National Research Council report. He said, "The report, released January 13, reaffirmed that the global warming indicated by the surface observations during the past twenty years is real." The report really said, "The various kinds of evidence examined by the panel led it to conclude that the observed disparity between the surface and lower- to mid-tropospheric temperatures trends during this particular twenty-year period is probably at least par-

tially real." There's a big difference here that academic honesty and journalistic integrity should have detected.

Another problem is that nowhere in the article is "global warming" defined or quantified. We are just left with this vague idea of cataclysmic heating, or ice ages, or something. (In reality, the argument is over about one degree Fahrenheit up or down.) We are also pelted with assertions about "greenhouse gases" and "ozone holes" being created by man-made efforts, while ignoring the vastly larger influence of sunlight variation (oh, what a concept!).

The good thing about science is that credentials are not truth. Anybody can figure out the truth with a little study. However, one should always consider the source of information for credibility and motive. If anything, a reporter who is obtaining anything from a political source, such as a government agency (National Research Council and others) needs to double his skeptical screen. This also goes for sources who live on government grants.

> CARL OLSON Chairman, State Department Watch Woodland Hills, California

Columbia Journalism Review (ISSN 0010 - 194X) is published bimonthly. Volume XXXIX, Number 1 May/June 2000. Copyright © 2000 Graduate School of Journalism, Columbia University. Subscription rates: one year \$19.95; two years \$34.95; three years \$47.95. Canadian and foreign subscriptions. add \$4 per year. Back issues: \$5.50. Please address all subscription mail to: Columbia Journalism Review, Subscription Service Department, P.O. Box 578, Mt. Morris, IL. 61054; (888) 425-7782. Periodical postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional mailing office. No claims for back copies honored after one year. National newsstand distribution: Eastern News Distributors, Inc., 2020 Superior St., Sandusky, Ohio 44870. Postmaster: send Form 3579 to Columbia Journalism Review, P.O. Box 578, Mt. Morris, IL 61054. Printed in the U.S.A.

Fulbright Scholar Program

Opportunities for Journalists

Over 70 grants in communications and journalism. Grant activity may include:

- · lecturing at institutions around the globe
- · participating in or leading writing workshops and seminars
- · consulting on curriculum development
- · conducting investigative research.

U.S. citizenship is required.

A complete listing of 2001-2002 Fulbright awards and application materials are available online at www.cies.org.

Application Deadline: August 1, 2000



Council for International Exchange of Scholars (CIES) 3007 Tilden Street, NW Suite 5L

Washington, DC 20008 E-mail: apprequest@cies.iie.org Tel: 202.686.7877 Fax: 202.362.3442

Web: www.cies.org

The Fulbright Scholar Program is sponsored by the United States Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs.

COUNTERPOINT

RETURN TO SENDER

BY STU BYKOFSKY

hen did journalism become a two-way street?

Turning what was once a one-way conduit of information from me to thee into a cloverleaf exchange of opinions is the dream of some media managers — e-mail is their devil's pitchfork.

In theory, it would be wonderful if every reader could talk to every reporter and editor about his work. In theory, it would be wonderful if every voter could talk to every senator about pending legislation. In practice, such ceaseless yapping would guarantee that no work ever got done.

Now here comes, "You've Got Mail!"

(Here's a deal: If you stick with me through this rant, I'll reward you with an idea about handling unwanted — and especially abusive — e-mail.)

Like you, I welcome new technology that lets me work faster and easier. What I've noticed is that while computers have made things faster, they have not made things easier. In fact, with their warp speed, they have jacked up stress levels — and I'm not even talking about when the computer pretends it's an Argentine death squad and makes finished copy "disappear."

What lit my fuse was a portion of Geneva Overholser's column last month — like fingernails scraping across a blackboard — that quoted Washington Post ombudsman

Counterpoint is a regular feature that provides an opportunity for those who disagree with CJR on a particular issue to express their point of view. Here, Stu Bykofsky, a journalist in Philadelphia, responds to Geneva Overholser's March/April column, "Newspapers Are Languishing as the Net Speeds Up." In it, Overholser took newspapers to task for their

In it, Overholser took newspapers to task for their resistance to change, pointing as an example to *The Washington Post*, where, she noted, "fewer than 200... newsroom staffers make their e-mail addresses available via washingtonpost.com."

E.R. Shipp as saying many *Post* readers "want to reach reporters and columnists — sometimes to praise, sometimes to damn, sometimes to seek additional information — via e-mail."

It frustrates them when they can't, and Shipp observed, "We finally have a way for readers to reach journalists conveniently and quickly — but the journalists don't want to be reached"

Has Shipp ever heard of the telephone? But that requires actual effort. E-mail is effortless, and all-too-often thoughtless. But it is fast. Let me speak as (I believe) the only Daily News staffer whose e-mail address is not published. (For background, I write four columns a week, Monday-Thursday.)

In addition to the telephone, there are three other perfectly fine ways readers can — and do — reach me: Inperson (often unannounced!), by fax, and by snail mail. (For the purposes of this screed, I won't include attempts by publicists to "channel" me.)

The Gentle, Guiding Genius who ordered staff e-mail addresses be published did it to make us more accessible. I don't want to be more accessible. I don't need to be more accessible.

When the e-mail edict was

announced, I asked for a secretary to help me with the expected barrage. I wouldn't be getting any help, GGG told me, but if the e-mail became a burden, I didn't have to answer it.

What's worse: "forcing" a reader to make a phone call or write a letter (which demands more thought, focus, and commitment than an e-mail), or deliberately not answering an e-mail? You slide from someone who's "not accessible" to someone's who an arrogant jerk.

Within a one-hour period today, I got an e-mail from some reader who wanted to know why there was no color on page one for our Oscar coverage. (That's not my department.) Another reader asked me to recommend a

'I DON'T WANT TO BE MORE ACCESSIBLE. I DON'T NEED TO BE MORE ACCESSIBLE.'

school for her son who had just been kicked out of public school. (I don't write about education, although I do write about bad boys.)

I should be flattered that readers think I am an information geyser. I should also be flattered that they feel comfortable enough with me to make these demands — each small, but large in the aggregate — on my time.

I answered each e-mail, I confess, for fear of appearing to be an arrogant jerk, something I'm often accused of anyway. (I'll tell you about the Dart I once got from CJR some other time.)

The misguided fascination with turning newspapers into a book discussion club flows from a growing unease that readers (to paraphrase Sally Field) don't like us, they just don't like us.

That's a problem, but the cure isn't to turn reporters and editors into e-mail goodwill ambassadors.

Researching, reporting, and writing my column, plus handling dozens of phone calls, voice-mails, faxes, and letters, more than fills my day. If you want me to do p.r. too, give me extra pay for the extra work.

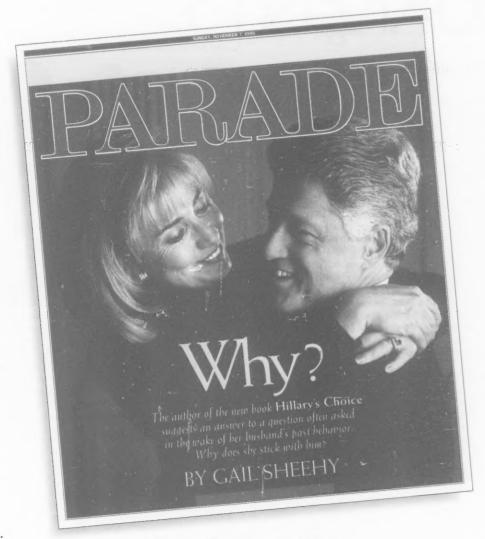
If that sounds mercenary, how about this: I suspect the vast majority of e-mail comes from people reading me online. These are freeloaders who won't pay to read me, but who wish to "communicate" with me. I don't "owe" them a damn thing. (I exempt people outside our circulation area, who can't buy the paper.)

Still here? Waiting for my idea?

When you get any e-mail you don't want, hit "reply" and type this: "Thank you for your comment. Unfortunately, (Your Name) receives too many e-mails to respond personally."

That ought to discourage them.

Stu Bykofsky is a columnist for the Philadelphia Daily News. Don't even think about emailing him.



The Sunday Magazine Where The World's Finest Journalists Write For America's Leading Newspapers

It Wouldn't Be Sunday Without A PARADIR

78 MILLION READERS EVERY SUNDAY

CURRENTS

HOW TO FIND BLACK JOURNALISTS

ews organizations are forever straining to find African-American new hires. But if they really want to make a difference, here's an idea: rather than fight over the cream of a scarce crop, why not seed the ground?

Student-run newspapers at many historically black colleges and universities are in a sorry state. Free-speech concerns abound, especially where journalism advisers aren't journalists. On average, according to preliminary figures from a study paid for by the Dow Iones Newspaper Fund, these papers run only monthly. None runs daily. And at a quarter of the schools studied, including the prestigious Tuskegee University, there is no student-run paper at all.

The study's author, journalism professor Reginald Owens of Louisiana Tech University, says funding shortages and fear of unfair coverage play into a cycle that dooms what could be a prime source of African-American journalists. Black colleges sometimes keep their student press on a short leash because administrators fear critical coverage by the mainstream (and mostly white) press, and do not want to provide a source of stories. And student journalists at predominantly black colleges report censorship problems proportionally more often than those at majority-white colleges of similar size, according to Mark Goodman, executive director of the Student Press Law Center, which provides legal advice to student newspapers.

Cherie Whitfield, a communications student at Shaw University, in Raleigh, North Carolina, thinks advisers want to quash "anything critical to their administration or to the school." Last year Whitfield tried to start a paper through the communications department. The department's director admits he told Whitfield she should write only positive stories to get the support of the administration. Then Whitfield learned that the school

already had a newspaper, The Shaw Journal, which this year will be published more than twice a year for the first time in the last five years. "I had no idea," Whitfield says. The university's public relations officer is among its advisers.

Pearl Stewart, who advises ailing college papers as "roving journalist" for the Black College Communication Association, notes that the general funding crunch at black colleges affects the quality of their student papers. According to an analysis of four-year colleges by the National Center for Education Statistics, per-student endowment at black colleges averages some \$3,500; at other schools about \$12,760.

Filling in the money gap for student-run newspapers at predominantly black colleges is not on many news organizations' radar screens, however desperate those organizations are for minority hires. "It is impossible for me to go to a college that doesn't have a program and get them to start a program," says Joe Grimm, a recruiting officer at the Detroit Free Press.



beating

Still, a very few organizations have focused some of their diversity development on building quality programs that can develop student journalists. The Freedom Forum funds the Black College Communication Association and Pearl Stewart's "roving." The Scripps-Howard Foundation has committed an initial \$2.3 million toward building a top journalism and communications program at historically black Hampton University, in

Hampton, Virginia.

Some black-college papers have shown what can happen when a school supports its press. *The Campus Echo*, in North Carolina Central University, has doubled in size and staff size since Bruce dePyssler came on as adviser last summer. The *Echo* is a hard-hitting monthly with a professional look and a \$40,000 budget.

NCCU's chancellor, former civil rights lawyer Julius Chambers, praises the *Echo*. "Even

if stories are critical," Chambers says, "it markets the university by showing people that we are a believer in free speech."

And the Echo is critical. After Chambers criticized NCCU cheerleaders' outfits. the Echo printed a cartoon showing the chancellor in a miniskirt. The student who drew that cartoon, Echo photo editor Rashaun Rucker, has a photography internship this summer at the Winston-Salem Journal. He knows he owes the job to his work at the Echo. "That's the first thing they asked," he says, " 'Do you have previous experience? Even a college paper is fine."

Would that more students — and more newsrooms — were so lucky.

— Ariel Hart Hart is research assistant to the dean at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism.

THE JOURNALISM QUIZ

How well do you know your misty past? Who said or wrote the following?

"The best fiction is far more true than any kind of journalism — and the best journalists have always known this."

a. Matt Drudge

b. Stephen Glass

c. Hunter S. Thompson

2. "To the extent that we are good and watchful sentinels, crying alarm when alarm is truly required, we live up to the responsibility of our inheritance. But... there is little to be said for the dog who barks all night . . . having hysterics at shadows. Such a protector in time comes to be known as that goddamned yapping dog."

a. Sam Donaldson

b. James Kilpatrick Jr.

c. Larry King

3. "The man looked down into the dead captain's face, and then he spoke directly to him, as though he were alive. He said: 'I'm sorry, old man'. Then a soldier came and stood beside the officer, and bent over, and he too spoke to his dead captain, not in a whisper but awfully tenderly, and he said: 'I sure am sorry, sir.'"

a. Christiane Amanpour

b. Ernie Pyle

c. Stephen Crane

4. "Today we are on the eve of launching a new industry . . . a new art so important in its implications that it is bound to affect all society. It is an art which shines like a torch of hope in a troubled world. It is a creative force which we must learn to utilize for the benefit of all mankind."

a. Steve Case

b. Al Neuharth

c. David Sarnoff

5. Journalism is "increasingly too superficial . . . If stories are underreported . . . or not passed through the powerful instincts of a great editor, we'll become irrelevant."

a. Bob Woodward

b. Steven Brill

c. Ida Tarbell

6. "People in powerful positions always have microphones. [But regular folk are what] "make the country run."

a. Don Imus

b. Susan Stamberg

c. Will Rogers

7. "The murder of a good reporter is more than the death of one man; it is the murder of truth..."

a. Terry Anderson

b. Veronica Guerin

c. George Polk

8. "Why can't you trust the press?... because it has become Big Business... with no other motive than profit for owner or stockholder (although hypocritically still maintaining the old American tradition of guiding and enlightening the people)."

a. George Seldes

b. George Will

c. George Stephanopoulous

9. "People worry about control of the world's media being concentrated in so few hands. But those who are concerned forget that, at the same time, there are more and more mom-and-pop information services doing just fine, thank you."

a. Michael Eisner

b. Nicholas Negroponte

c. Rupert Murdoch

10. "So let us today drudge on about our inescapably impossible task of providing every week a first rough draft of a history that will never be completed about a world we can never really understand."

a. A.J. Liebling .

b. Philip Graham

c. Mark Twain

-Eric Newton

Eric Newton is the News Historian at the Newseum, in Arlington, Virginia. He edited the Newseum's first book, Crusaders, Scoundrels, Journalists, published in January. Didn't do that well? That may be because the issues and ideas of journalism go around the track more than once.

ANSWERS TO QUIZ

T. C, 2. 8, 3. 8, 4. C, 5. A, 6. 8, 7. C, 8. A, 9. 8, 10. 8

TECHNOLOGY CORNER: SMOOTHER SEARCHING

Google

About Google Jobs@Google

Enter your search terms

Gongle Sessch | I'm Feeling Lucky

Keeping track of journalistically useful Web sites is not easy. Here are two suggestions for improving your searching. Neither is perfect, but they're free.

Google.com

There are search engines and then there is Google. If you are tired of results that say "8,374 pages found," try the search engine that relies on a hidden "voting" system to narrow your choices. Google provides three options: one, a traditional search with several sets of results; two, a directory search, similar to Yahoo!; and three, an "I'm feeling lucky" search, which takes you directly to the one Web page that Google's software calculates most people are looking for. Try it with "American Cancer Society" - the "lucky" option will take you right to cancer.org, the society's site.

About.com

Once known as the Mining Company, this site stands out because of its use of human "guides" — experts that show you around a particular topic.

Some 700 guides tackle 50,000 subjects — from action-figure collecting to zoos. For journalists new to a topic or looking for information on deadline, a guide's page can highlight helpful sites and suggest further reading. The guide for U.S. newspapers, for example, is an editor with fifteen years' experience.

— Sreenath Sreenivasan Sreenivasan (sree@sree.net) teaches new media at Columbia and "Improving Your Surfing" seminars around the country.

A GOOD-LOOKING COLUMN

oyce Purnick, in her Metro Matters column in *The* New York Times, found a subtle way of protesting those ubiquitous physical descriptions of women in the public eye that tend to appear in print (latest case in point, "Bad Hair Day Hall of Fame," a series of photos of Hillary Clinton in the April Capital Style). Purnick's March 13 column, an account of the Inner Circle, an annual political lampoon attended by influential types, described the attire and hair-do's of only the men. New York Post columnist Steve Dunleavy was spotted "smoothing his salt-and-pepper pompadour" while interim New York City schools chancellor Harold O.
Levy was "wearing a tuxedo, a
vest of kimono silk, and a
fish-shaped tie." Neither of
the two women mentioned in
the column — Hillary Clinton and New York governor
George Pataki's aide, Zenia
Mucha, got the physical onceover.

Reporters "never talk about the appearance of the men," explains Purnick. "Basically, the column meant cut it out with the women unless you want us to do it to the men." She may have been a bit too subtle, however. "Most people somehow missed it," Purnick says.

— Aparna Surendran Surendran is an intern for CJR.

CURRENTS

PRIVATE GUNS, PUBLIC RECORDS

Back in July 1999, Dave Greiling, executive editor of the Fort Collins Coloradoan, published the names of the 263 people in Larimer County who had recently been granted "concealed carry" gun permits. Not surprisingly, this stirred



the ire of the state's gun faithful, including that of a state legislator who introduced a bill prohibiting any future such disclosures in the state. In February, as the bill was waltzing its way through the Colorado legislature, Greiling published another 344 names. This time he stirred not only local ire but also that of Rush Limbaugh and a vocal segment of the nation's gun lobby. They complained all over the Internet, with at least one Web site publishing the names, home addresses, and phone numbers for Greiling, his publisher, and other executives of the Coloradoan, a Gannett daily with a weekday circulation of 28,000.

But until the law changes, he'd do it again. The decision to publish the names, Greiling says, didn't come from simply looking around for something to print on a slow news day. A new county sheriff, Jim Alderden, had been elected in 1998 by focusing his campaign partly on the reluctance of the old sheriff, Richard Shockley, to issue concealed carry permits. Shockley required applicants to show "just cause" to go covertly packing, and had issued only about forty permits in eight years. In the first year after Alderden took office, more than 600 people had been issued permits.

"On an issue as highly charged as guns," Greiling wrote in an article explaining his deci-

sion, "everyone has the right to know who may be carrying a weapon." Providing such information, he argued, is a newspaper's job. Some of the objections to the publication of names had centered on the idea that printing their names might subject gun owners to some increased danger. "But that flies in the face of the contention of pro-gun advocates," Greiling wrote, "that if the bad guys think you may have a gun, it will deter them from criminal activity."

In March the bill prohibiting the publication of names of concealed carry permit holders passed the Colorado Senate, and in April it was awaiting the governor's signature, which seemed likely. First Amendment advocates were not happy. "What I see this legislature doing, and what I see being done around the country is a basic whacking back of public openness," says Judith M. Buddenbaum, a mass media law professor at Colorado State University. "This trend toward legislating government secrecy is dangerous."

-Bear Jack Gebhardt Gebhardt lives in Fort Collins, Colorado.

LANGUAGE CORNER

TO EACH HIS OTHER

onnie Matthew, a subeditor at The Times of India living in Ahmedabad, in the state of Gujarat, emailed this: "What's the difference, in usage, between 'each other' and 'one another'? Is 'each other' used in the case of two people and 'one another' in the case of more than two?"

Yes and no. The rule is clearly arbitrary - examine the words and it's hard to see why any distinction is made between the phrases. Designating "each other" for two and "one another" for more than two was the brainstorm of an obscure grammarian in the late eighteenth century; the phrases had been used interchangeably for centuries before, and have been since, by writers from Samuel Johnson to Noah Webster to E.L. Doctorow. Merriam Webster's Dictionary of English Usage, the

source for that history, says the rule was "cut out of the whole cloth" and "there is no sin in its violation." The venerable H.W. Fowler declared in 1926 that "the differentiation is neither of present utility nor based on historical usage," and the current edition of his Modern English Usage concludes that belief in the rule "is unten-

HOWEVER: Although a needless complication, the supposed rule is prescribed as style — the sometimes arbitrary dicta that publications issue in the service of consistency - by such broadly influential outfits as The Associated Press and The New York Times. So while logic may not sanctify it, safety may.

- Evan Jenkins A lot more about writing right is in Language Corner at CJR's Web site, www.cjr.org.

LEE HILLS, 1906-2000



hrough nearly three decades as editor or publisher of The Miami Herald and Detroit the

Free Press, Lee Hills helped build the foundation of modern news reporting. His "news first" edicts were legendary. During World War II, when newsprint was rationed, editor Hills persuaded the Herald's publisher to cut back on display advertising to allow extra

space for war coverage. As publisher, Hills is said to have contacted the Herald's city desk to report an auto accident - one he had caused.

Later in his career, Hills helped arrange the merger of Knight Newspapers and Ridder Publications. As Knight Ridder's first chairman, he spread his gospel of fairness, accuracy, and integrity to a generation of journalists, and helped turn the craft of newspaper reporting into a disciplined profession.

- David Villano Villano lives in Miami.

They get the awards. The community gets the reward.



Ken Armstrong



Steve Mills



Maurice Possley

Congratulations to

Ken Armstrong, Steve Mills and Maurice Possley on

winning the George Polk Award for criminal justice reporting,

the Scripps Howard Award for public service,

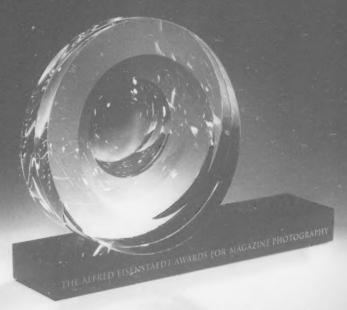
the National Headliner Award for public service and "Best of Show," and

an Investigative Reporters and Editors certificate.

Their hard-hitting series "The Failure of the Death Penalty in Illinois," and "Trial & Error" revealed how justice is applied, and misapplied, in Illinois and nationally.

You can find these articles, photos and more at chicagotribune.com

Chicago Tribune



=8=1/00001;/4/1=3==112;000

Over the course of his seven-decade-long career as a LIFE staff photographer, Alfred Eisenstaedt showed the world that photography is more than a means of expression. It's a different way of seeing - one that treats each moment as an irreplaceable jewel. The Eisie Awards are a celebration of his spirit and a tribute to today's best magazine photographers who keep that spirit alive. Like the thousands of photographic gems Eisie left. behind, the work of this year's winners brightens our lives, broadens our horizons and ennobles our profession

LIFE LEGEND

NEW TALENT

TRAVEL

Brigitte Lacombe, Condé Nast Traveler Single Image James Whitlow Delano, Madison Essay

ARCHITECTURE

Dom Furore, Golf Digest Single Image Robert Polidori, The New Yorker Essay

COVER OF THE YEAR

SPORTSStuart MacFarlane, Sports Illustrated Single Image Gregory Heisler, ESPN The Magazine Essay

PORTRAIT

Catherine Chalmers, The New York Times Magazine Single Image Geof Kern, Joe Essay

NATURE & ENVIRONMENT
J. Pat Carter, Time Single Image
Art Wolfe, Audubon Essay

George Kochaniec Jr., LIFE Single Image Joachim Ladefoged, The New York Times Magazine Essay

JOURNALISTIC IMPACT

James Nachtwey, Time Single Image Gilles Peress, The New Yorker Essay

Steven Meisel, Vogue Single Image Annie Leibovitz, Vogue Essay

Amy Guip, ESPN The Magazine Single Image John Huet, ESPN The Magazine Essay

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Max Aguilera-Hellweg, *LIFE* Single Image Gary Schneider, *The New York Times Magazine* Essay

THE WAY WE LIVE
Mark Peterson, LIFE Single Image
David Alan Harvey, National Geographic Essay

The Alfred Eisenstaedt Awards for Magazine Photography™ are administered by the Graduate School of Journalism at Columbia University, under a grant from LIFE and are sponsored by:







DARTS & . . .

CAUSE FOR CONCERN

Like the Today show's Katie Couric, who was moved by her husband's death from colon cancer to anchor an exemplary public service series about the disease, television reporter Jodi Brooks of WPMI, the NBC affiliate in Mobile, Alabama, has also been inspired by personal experience to pursue an admirable, though somewhat less Laurel-worthy, crusade. Couric's series (March 6-10) objectively reported on the research, treatment, and most emphatically, prevention of colon cancer through early detection - underscored by Couric's own unglamorous, on-air colonoscopy; Brooks has been covering a county-wide program in which participating hospitals agree to take in unwanted newborns, no questions asked. But Brooks's attention to that humane story is journalistically problematic. The "Secret Safe Place for Babies" program is, in fact, her very own brainchild (conceived after too many assignments to "dumpster baby" cases), which she promotes around the country. Further, her newborns program (which is not without its critics) enlists the cooperation of a state agency better held at arms length. Most questionable of all is her partnership with district attorney John Tyson, Jr., whose promise not to prosecute mothers, so long as the baby is unharmed, is crucial to her program's success. To borrow from Justice' Holmes's observation about the law: great stories can make bad journalism. Alas.

THE INSIDERS

Journalists entrusted with material alleging serious, let alone sensational, wrongdoing do not, as a rule, kindly hand that material off to the alleged wrongdoers. An unlikely exception has recently come to light: Don Hewitt, executive producer of CBS's 60 Minutes. As revealed by Alfred Lubrano in a sidebar to his two-part series (March 12, 13) in The Philadelphia Inquirer — a series almost too painful to read — it all began in 1998, when James Neal, the plaintiff's lawyer in a medical malpractice and research-fraud suit against two celebrity gynecologists, Camran Nezhat and his brother Farr, sent his records to Hewitt in the hope of interesting him in a 60 Minutes investigation. In 1999, Neal followed up with more material — a list of doctors who were potential witnesses against the brothers — but he again failed to engage Hewitt's professional interest. Hewitt's personal interest, however, was another story: his wife was among the Nezhats's satisfied patients, and Hewitt had quietly forwarded some, if not all (he says he can't recall exactly) of the lawyer's material directly on to them. ("I did it because he [Camran Nezhat] is a friend of the family's and because he's our doctor," Hewitt told the Inquirer's Lubrano and CIR.) Not surprisingly, the damaging documents wound up in the hands of the Nezhats' attorney, with disturbing results: that attorney wrote to each of those potential witnesses, sending along a copy of a letter from an official at Stanford University, where the Nezhats are based, to another doctor there who was critical of the Nezhats, threatening him with a defamation suit. It was a message, one legal ethicist told the Inquirer, that came "awfully close to threatening witnesses." Meanwhile, Hewitt, getting wind of Lubrano's pursuit of the Nezhats saga, felt compelled to phone the Inquirer and praise their work. Too bad we won't be seeing any of this on 60 Minutes - or, for that matter, on 20/20, which earlier uncritically profiled the controversial Camran Nezhat and to whose executive producer, Meredith White, Neal sent copies of the very same material he sent to Hewitt. It seems that White is also a loyal patient (to whom the Nezhats dedicated a book). Small world, isn't it?

COMPROMISING POSITIONS

Early this year, Canada's three largest newspapers fell into bed with the country's Reform party. One by one, Conrad Black's National Post, Thomson's Globe and Mail, and the independently owned Toronto Star had been seduced by a heady proposition: the papers would get an "exclusive" advance copy of a bombshell letter to party members

from Reform leader Preston Manning in which he threatened to resign if they did not endorse his plan to combine their party with the Progressive-Conservatives; in exchange, the papers had to promise that they would report the story straight, unadulterated by reaction, comment, or criticism. There was no apparent resistance. Only *The Toronto Sun*, whose liberal leanings rendered it literally unapproachable, escaped with its journalistic virtue intact.

COME-HITHER NEWS

In the Sunday, February 20, edition of the Butte, Montana, Standard, standards were barely evident. The broadsheet devoted the entire front page of its lifestyle section (plus another twenty column-inches inside) to a gratuitous glorification of the striptease in general and of the local "Billy Rays gentlemen's exotic dancing club" in particular. Fetchingly illustrated — a twelve-inch-high, four-color photo featured the bare-breasted, g-stringed, lesbian "Rachel" bumping and grinding her "serpentine body" into a pole on-stage; another showed a close-up of her well-filled garter stuffed with dollars collected from the "upscale . . . clientele" of truckers and regulars - the piece wasn't shy about plugging Billy Rays's other attractions, either (its "live dancing, video gaming, liquor, and food," "tasteful décor," "understated elegance," "ideal" location), not to mention its hours ("Tuesday through Saturday nights") and its openings for the kind of classy dancers ("I'm not some street whore turning tricks," said one) starring in the story. In an apology two days later, Standard publisher Jim Filiaggi agreed with the "overwhelming negative" readers' response. "If we had this to do over again," he wrote, "we would not have run the story."

The Darts & Laurels column is written by Gloria Cooper, CJR's managing editor, to whom nominations should be addressed.

LAURELS

CHICAGO DIRT

Cleaning up the parks and streets after festivals and fairs is big business, and many cities have set up set-aside programs to make sure that companies run by women and members of minority groups get a share of such publicly funded action. So it's been in Chicago, where under Mayor Richard Daley, Windy City Maintenance, purportedly owned and run by one Patricia Green, has been cleaning up to the tune of a million dollars a year. That is, until the Chicago Tribune began a cleanup of its own. In a thorough investigation that began in July, staff writers Andrew Martin. Laurie Cohen, and Ray Gibson revealed that 1) the seventy-one-year-old Patricia Green (Duff) was in fact a front for several male Duffs with strong political ties to Daley (not to mention links to the mob); 2) that no routine check of the company's claim to woman-owned status had ever taken place; and 3) that numerous deals between the city and other Duff-connected companies - including beer vending and a recycling service ostensibly (but not really) owned by an African-American - were filling the family buckets with even more millions of bucks. The Trib's exposé prompted a five-month investigation by city hall; the results of which were announced on New Year's Eve: Windy City Maintenance would be stripped of its favored-treatment status, and plans for an honest certification process were in the works.

LOCAL HEROES

Maybe it's a trend. Or — better yet — a movement. In three recent incidents journalists taught their bosses a thing or two about integrity. At KYW-TV in Philadelphia, anchors Dave Frankel and Dawn Stensland refused to take part in "sponsored" news segments that included a mention of, or an interview with, the sponsor of the segment. (As reported by columnist Stu Bykofsky in the January 12 Philadelphia Daily News, the station dropped the practice after the newsroom revolt.) At the Koahnic Broadcast Corporation in Alaska, Nellie Moore, national program manager for KNBA, the nation's only urban Native American radio station, and D'Anne Hamilton, director of the company's training center, took issue on the air with the company's insistence that their new weekly talk show use as hosts officials of KNBA's major underwriters. (As reported in the March 6 Anchorage Daily News, Moore and Hamilton were fired; four newsroom colleagues resigned in support.) Meanwhile, at the new Gazette chain in California's San Luis Obispo County, where owners Mary and David Weyrich announced in February that their five free weekly papers would no longer print anything that portraved abortion or homosexuality in a favorable light, at least fifteen employees — reporters, editors, columnists, a publisher — quit. In the ensuing storm of public protests, canceled ads, and requests to halt delivery, one columnist who left wrote this to the San Francisco Chronicle: "I feel nothing but astonished and grateful pride to discover that over a dozen people still believe that good journalism actually matters and is worthy of sacrifice. Imagine that."

HERE COMES THE SUN

Bumping into the unyielding doors of the Guiliani administration has become such a routine experience for the New York City press that when a newcomer managed recently to pry one of those doors open it was man-bites-dog news. Daniel L. Ackman, a student at Columbia's Graduate School of Journalism, was researching his master's project on the lives of taxi drivers and had come to the point where he needed to check out his sources' complaints about unfair treatment in taxi court, the administrative hearings at which the Taxi and Limousine

Commission rules on charges brought against drivers by inspectors, police officers, or passengers. Informed that the hearings were closed to the public, his request for special permission summarily denied, his attempt to interview lawyers and drivers in outside waiting rooms thwarted by security guards, the journalism student (who also happens to be a lawyer) sued - and won. In a March 17 decision that found no good reason to exempt the TLC from New York State's "strong public policy . . . of public access," State Supreme Court Judge Stanley Parness ruled that Ackman be granted admission to the hearings. Hear, hear.

REALITY NEWS

While most of the press stood in the receiving line, chattering about the dowry, speculating on future offspring, and registering general bemusement over the runaway ratings of Fox-TV's "Who Wants to Marry a Multimillionaire," two skeptical reporters crashed the media party, asking rude questions about the background of the groom and posting answering documents on their small, littleknown (until then) Web site. thesmokinggun.com. What Smoking Gun founders William Bastone, an investigative reporter The Smaking Coll

Village Voice, and Dan Green, a former editor of POV, discovered in their dogged, nationwide search through public records - namely, that the smarmy "multimillionaire" had, among other highlights in a dubious career, once threatened to kill a former fiancee, who had taken out a restraining order against him - put a fitting end to the whole cynical spectacle and (at least for now) the many programs like it that surely would have followed it down the gold-paved aisle.

FOR THE PLANET®

S. DEVELOP MEDICINES
THAT FIGHT HIV.
(DID THAT)

(PRESSING AHEAD ON NEXT

GENERATION MEDICINES,

WOULD LOVE TO SEE THE DAY

NO ONE HAS THIS DISEASE.)

1-800-441-7515 OR WWW.DUPONT.COM

The miracles f science

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF TIMES MIRROR

BY DAVID LAVENTHOL

t's hard to like a corporation, let alone mourn one. But when the Tribune Company announced it was acquiring Times Mirror, I felt like a close friend had died.

I was associated with Times Mirror for thirty years and I remember what it was like to be on both sides of a newspaper acquisition. At *Newsday* in the spring of 1970, I was executive editor when owner Harry Guggenheim decided to sell the fiercely independent paper to Times Mirror. He kept discussions secret not only from the newsroom but also from the publisher, Bill Moyers, who learned about it the day it happened.

Several days later, Otis Chandler, publisher of the Los Angeles Times and a leading member of the owning family, arrived and we anxiously awaited learning our fate. As it turned out, Chandler may have learned more than we did. Twice during his talk to the staff he was interrupted by announcements that Newsday had won a Pulitzer Prize. That set a quality benchmark: we were in a league with the Los Angeles Times (which didn't win any that year). As the day wore on, Chandler conferred with business executives while Movers hosted a champagne party in the newsroom. As the editor, I bounced back and forth, not really sure of which way to turn.

Bill Moyers went on to a unique, distinguished career in television, of course, and I stayed at Times Mirror as editor and then publisher at *Newsday*. In 1985, I was in charge of the eastern newspapers and I was one of those who went to Baltimore when we acquired the *Sun*. We walked into a news meeting where several editors knew me. I could see the expression on their faces change from curiosity to anxiety as they reasoned through what was happening: "I know these people . . . what are they doing here? . . . wait a minute . . . oh my God, they must be acquiring us."

As former *Time* editor Ray Cave said about the AOL/Time Warner merger, "This is the world we live in."

In a way, Times Mirror started it all. It was the first newspaper-based media



View from the atrium: Robert F. Erburu, Dr. Franklin Murphy, and Otis Chandler in 1979

company to be traded on the New York Stock Exchange, in 1964. Times Mirror had actually started in 1884, incorporating the Times Mirror Printing and Binding House and the Los Angeles Times, and later spawned the afternoon Mirror. But it only developed a national presence in the 1960s when Norman Chandler, Otis's father, decided that the company needed to diversify to protect the Times and its profitability from the vagaries of the business cycle.

In order to focus on expanding the company, Norman Chandler, with strong urging from his wife, Buff, named their thirty-year-old son Otis as publisher in 1960. Several of Norman's siblings (there were six) and their families were disappointed because they had expected that brother Philip, then general manager of the *Times*, would become publisher.

In the years that followed, Otis Chandler presided over the remarkable growth of the paper as a journalistic organization and as a business. He built it into a great newspaper, one of the best in the world. This was a source of great pride to Angelenos but many members

of the Chandler family remained unenthusiastic, particularly when the paper adopted journalistic values of coverage and opinion so opposite from the family's conservative roots.

Norman Chandler retired in 1968 and Franklin Murphy, then chancellor of UCLA, succeeded him, the first nonfamily member to lead the company. Murphy was a quietly dynamic leader both at the company and in the community. He believed Los Angeles was growing into a great world city and that it needed a great newspaper like the *Times*.

Shortly after the Otis Chandler trip to Newsday, I had my first visit to company headquarters. It occupied only a small part of the complex of Los Angeles Times buildings at Times Mirror Square. (Will it become "Tribune Square?") I was directed to the sixth floor and on arrival for a moment thought I was in a museum. What I saw was a tranquil open space, cool stone floors, notable contemporary paintings on the walls, and greenery and sculpture strategically placed. The southern California sun was streaming through skylights into the atrium. The

LA TWILS

16

area had been designed by the architect William Pereira under the watchful guidance of Buff Chandler, who is memorialized by a gentle bubbling pool on one side of the atrium. This was clearly not a newsroom. But it expressed Times Mirror's pride and aspirations.

I was given a tour and an explanation of the glass-walled, twelve-foot-high-doored offices: one had been "Mr. Norman's," another was Dr. Murphy's. Otis's principal office was in the *Times*'s part of the building. Corporate stayed separate from the paper. Later I became president of the company and worked in that setting. The funny thing was, you got used to it.

The seventies and eighties were largely good years for Times Mirror, under Murphy's stewardship and that of Robert Erburu, who had been a lawver for the company since the 1960s, (After stepping down as publisher of the Times in 1980, Otis Chandler became corporate chairman for a time but was increasingly inactive as the 1980s moved on.) At its peak, under Erburu's leadership, the company owned seven other newspapers (including fledgling New York Newsday), a large cable system, television stations, consumer magazines and books, a newsprint company, and a number of professional information companies. Even with this diversification, the soul of the company remained in newspapers. The corporation had the primary goal of increasing shareholder wealth, of course, but expanding the importance and influence of Los Angeles was just as motivating to its leadership. And for the newspapers, starting at the Times, the paradigm was highest quality journalism and highest quality business leadership, an accomplishment widely recognized by media peers.

hings changed in the nineties. The end of the cold war decimated the defense industry-based southern California economy. New technology was driving media businesses to look at the future differently. Diversification seemed to work only on a large scale as megacompanies gobbled up smaller businesses and sometimes each other. Meanwhile, the trend the Chandlers had started by going public now resulted in public ownership of more than three-quarters of American daily newspapers. They had become less distinctive institutions, less connected to their communities, more homogenized, often led by people whose only instinct seemed to be to increase shareholder wealth. Journalistic and community achievements seemed secondary.

In 1994, at sixty-five, Robert Erburu retired as chief executive officer. He was replaced by Mark Willes, an executive from General Mills with an academic and financial as well as marketing background, but with no experience whatsoever in running newspapers.

One of Willes's first decisions was his choice of office: he took one in the corner of the floor, away from the glassed-in rooms in the atrium. There were no windows looking out on the atrium. And you couldn't see in. He said he preferred it because it had windows looking outside the building rather than inside, a reminder that we ought to be thinking about our customers first. Symbolic? Maybe, but not necessarily in the way he intended.

A much more substantive early deci-

Daily News until 1991, are now saying a newspaper in New York City is important to their strategy.)

Unfettered by history or experience, Willes launched several initiatives as he sought to redefine newspaper companies, including selling off most nonnewspaper assets and developing growth strategies for the papers keved to increasing circulation and breaking down the walls between editorial and business. When the Times's publisher left, he named himself to the position. Later he gave up the post to name a successor who also had no newspaper experience. This leadership wore thin on a number of executives who quickly departed. Meanwhile, members of the Chandler family trust (Otis Chandler had retired as a trustee a couple of years before). which had voting control of the company, saw little but problems ahead and

'THE COMPANY NEEDED TO DIVERSIFY TO PROTECT THE TIMES FROM VAGARIES OF THE BUSINESS CYCLE'

sion was what to do about money-losing New York Newsday. Willes, Newsday publisher Raymond Jansen, and I took a helicopter ride from Manhattan across Long Island the day before the meeting on the subject. We viewed the sea of houses in that prototypical suburban region. But as Willes noted when we landed, we saw only one construction site on the fifty-mile trip. And that was the new New York Times printing plant in Queens.

I still believed that he would understand the strategy and agree to keep going. But I was too close to the situation to see where he was heading, having started New York Newsday and lived for ten years with its progress and problems. Willes saw closing New York Newsday as a key to improving a sagging stock price - and it was. The next day, after a limited conversation among a dozen executives, he shut it down. Jansen had had a plan that he believed would make New York Newsday work financially. But he never got a chance to fully present it. As we got up to leave, I began to cry, the only time I ever cried at a public meeting. I guess I really was close to it. (Ironically, the officials of the Tribune Company, which owned the New York sought ways to maximize their investment. Many had never cared for the paper since the days of "Uncle Philip." If there was any lingering doubt, the Staples Center furor last fall erased it.

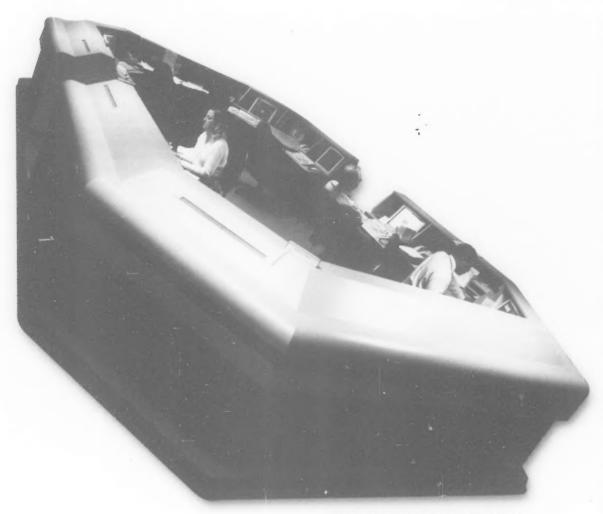
And so one day in late February, Mark Willes received a visit from family trust chairman Warren Williamson and the trust's lawyer, William Stinehart. They told him that they intended to sell the company to Tribune and that they wanted him to expedite it. A colleague who saw Willes shortly afterwards said he was "white as a sheet" and that Willes told him "I just had the worst hour of my life."

Tribune chairman John Madigan explained the arrangement to Tribune employees when the deal was completed and announced on March 13. The name of the company would be the "Tribune" Company. Corporate offices would be in Chicago. Madigan would be the chief executive officer. Few vestiges would remain in Los Angeles. Times Mirror, in fact, would cease to exist.

This is the world we live in.

David Laventhol is publisher and editorial director of the Columbia Journalism Review.

CONVERGE ME UP, SCOTTIE



THE ORLANDO SENTINEL'S MULTIMEDIA CONTROL CENTER

Tribune Beams Toward A Multimedia Future

wo days after the Tribune Company of Chicago announced plans to absorb Times Mirror, the Los Angeles Times's Pulitzer Prizewinning TV critic Howard Rosenberg abruptly decided that station KTLA - owned by Tribune - was "the best station on the planet." ("Love you, man!"), the perfect model of "intelligence, integrity, honesty, humility, kindness, goodness, public service" In that March 15 column, Rosenberg declared he'd taken a fresh look at KTLA's programming and found hitherto unsuspected glories: the KTLA Morning News, for example, and its madcap onscreen staff ("a newscast can't have too many stand-up comics"); also, "that sweet old dearie" Sally Jessy Raphael; and reruns of The Nanny ("Funneeeeee!") He could scarcely convey "the thrill" of becoming part of KTLA's family. "And did I mention," he wondered, "how much I love Dawson's Creek?"

Then the comic mask fell: "You can see the problem: These TV entities are part of my beat. Read that to mean potential conflict of interest." Noting that Tribune's surprise takeover extended the trend of concentrating media power in fewer hands, he asked: "Is bigger necessarily better?"

For stockholders like me, possibly. But it's hard to see how the wider public stands to benefit Streamlining ownership this way hardly promotes diversity. Just as worrisome are the potential conflicts down here on the lowly pavement created by the incestuous couplings taking place in the towers of corporatedom. [R]eaders [will] have a right to be ever more skeptical about what is written about TV in this column. If I praise Tribune properties, will it be because I think they're worthy or because we're family, and I have my own financial stake at heart? If I fault competitors of Tribune properties, will it be legit or chauvinism? And conversely, if I'm critical of Tribune properties, will it be deserved or will I be overcompensating to show my independence?

Rosenberg's fears are old stuff these days, and have been, ever since *Time* magazine critics agonized over how to review Warner Brothers movies when the two companies hooked up way back in 1990. And besides, the proposed Tribune/Times Mirror marriage is small potatoes (\$8 billion) compared with that earlier one (\$14 billion); and it's off the radar screen when contrasted with AOL's swallowing of Time Warner (\$135 billion) in January. Some issues — self



Tribune Tower: vast empire's headquarters

censorship, for example — will always be with us in this new age of megamedia. They're as crucial as ever, but get lost amid rampant theorizing over the larger implications of media conglomerating. [See special report on self-censorship, page 41]

Tribune and Times Mirror had kept their stunning merger a tight secret from the press and public right up until the announcement - as had AOL and Time Warner - even though Tribune executives conducted a self-promotional confab with analysts, bankers, and institutional investors on Friday, March 9, during which nobody breathed a word about the negotiations with Times Mirror that were just concluding. "Looking ahead, we're aggressively moving to exploit multimedia opportunities in broadcasting and publishing to their fullest extent," said Tribune chairman, president, and c.e.o. John W. Madigan. The conferees didn't have long to wait to figure out what he meant.

Days later Madigan announced "the nation's premier local market multimedia company" — if not a Goliath, then a

muscular David, commanding eleven newspapers — most importantly in New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles — twenty-two television stations, four radio stations, a magazine publishing arm, the Chicago Land TV (CLTV) all-news cable channel, part ownership of the WB and the Food networks, and a treasure chest of dot com goodies including stakes in AOL, iVillage, iBlast Networks and others. And, yes, the Chicago Cubs.

Tribune is hardly the only multimedia practitioner but it is surely one of the most devoted. Multimedia means not only getting your news out around the clock through a variety of avenues, but offering advertisers a richer menu of choices for how to spend their money with a single company. Audiences and advertisers, goes the argument, will gradually drift away from newspapers that can't deliver customized, interactive realtime media. According to Forrester Research, "the era of local media consolidation is upon us" because the loss of national news and classified advertising to the Internet has made more newspaper mergers inevitable.

Asked to crystallize in one formula the main reason for Tribune's decision to buy Times Mirror, Jack Fuller, president of Tribune Publishing, puts it succinctly: "Having television and newspapers in three major markets in the country is a powerful position to be in in a changing environment. So whether it's getting national advertising into our newspapers, or staking out a position on the Internet, or moving toward a broadband environment in which print, video, and audio all will be elements — having that position in the strong spine of a network in the major cities of the country looked to us to be strategically an important move."

Multimedia came to the *Trib* early when publisher Col. Robert R. McCormick in the 1920s perceived synergies in broadcasting. Hence, WGN-AM, then WGN-TV in the forties, and later WPIX in New York, KTLA in Los Angeles, WDBC in Washington, and eventually 21 other broadcast properties.

In most Tribune newsrooms and in its Washington bureau, reporters and editors from print, television, and the Internet sit at special multimedia desks to share their stories. In Orlando, for example, the Sentinel newsroom has a kind of space-ship command post run by a "deputy managing editor for multimedia" who coordinates the work of an online editor, photo editor, graphics editor, and local news editor. A print

reporter may write a story for the Web site in the morning, appear on television to update it at noon, and then bang out the piece in long-form for the next day's edition of the paper. That rolling deadline means that news emits from the Sentinel around the clock instead of once a day. Print reporters get professional coaching about how to look good on television. Staff photographers carry a digital TV camera along with their still cameras so they can cover for print, TV, and the Web site (which displays full-motion video). In the near future, the Sentinel expects to create a so-called "content management system" that will let them ship stories at the touch of a button to all the other Tribune newsrooms around the country.

In Chicago, an eye-catching feature of the newsroom is a 24 x 26-foot platform where print reporters come to deliver reports to remote-controlled television cameras. An "intergroup operations coordinator" works out which of the Trib's stories will get the multimedia treatment. The twenty-person staff of Chicagotribune.com, the paper's Web site, stands ready to "repurpose" Tribune material or contribute news to the paper. WGN-TV and radio pass along video and audio to the Web. And so forth, in everevolving permutations. Nobody gets paid extra for spreading one's talents across diverse media, and that's an issue that may bubble to the surface in the future. Recognition is given, however, at times of performance review.

eyond such techno-savvy efforts, Tribune's portfolio of Internet investments is worth about \$2 billion. It bought into AOL in the early 1990s when hardly a soul knew what an ISP was. Sites like CareerPath.com, BlackVoices.com, Apartments.com, Go2Orlando. com, and others are all pieces of the grand strategy of keeping Tribune's inky thumbs in many New Media pies.

That strategy derives in large part from one man, Charles T. Brumback, who—along with McCormick, the paper's haughty suzerain for over forty years—was a key sculptor of Tribune's contour. Tough, abrasive, opinionated, Brumback—a Princeton grad who won the Bronze Star in Korea—retired as board chairman at the end of 1995; Madigan is his chosen successor. "I think newspapers are in an ideal position to be around for a long time," he told CJR recently, "but they've got to change the way they do business." Decades ago, he worried that newspapers would be made obsolete by



Center of attention: Tribune's John Madigan will be c.e.o. of merged company

emerging technologies and he started looking at complementary ways to deliver news. Papers that put all the new journalistic tools to good use would prosper, he decided, "but those that keep looking in the rear view mirror are going to go down with the Titanic."

Newspapers are no longer the exclusive "funnel" they used to be, Brumback says, and readers don't scrutinize them

systematically front to back anymore because much of that news is available elsewhere. "That's a hard thing for many professional journalists to cope with." So too is being bought out and run by a distant landlord, but Brumback is impatient with that complaint. "I don't know where they get this stuff — run from Chicago! Ask the people in Orlando or Fort Lauderdale if they're being run from

Chicago." He's peevish too about journalists who "are scared to death that a new owner will know as much about what they do as they know themselves."

Many Los Angeles Times readers were, in fact, nervous after the sale. "Bummer!" one wrote the paper. "Somehow I feel like someone just cut

down the family oak tree that was planted by great-great-great grandad and then sold it for firewood." Another: "I am in mourning... and feel a sense of loss and betrayal The Chandlers gave their loyalty to money rather than to the community."

In the endgame, that was true, but for more than 100 years the family and its paper had been part of Los Angeles's DNA, a crucial ingredient in the city's growth and cultural life. But Tribune made them an offer they couldn't refuse (almost double Times Mirror's stock valuation), which killed two birds with one stone: it makes the family richer than ever; and at the same time ends the tumultuous reign of Mark Willes.

Most Times staffers judged the Chandlers' sell-out as the final indignity after five years of Willes, a businessman with no journalistic background who took over as chief executive and attempted to revolutionize the newspaper business. The catalogue of his misfortunes is well-known, climaxed by the decision to split the advertising profits from a special section with the Staples Center arena, which happened to be the subject of that section. In spite of all that, the Times's economic fortunes were on the rise. Ad volume was up 13.4 percent in 1999 over the previous year; the company's stock was at an all-time high.

Enter Tribune and its boss, John Madigan, another non-journalist, who came up through the ranks of brokerage houses like Duff & Phelps, Paine-Webber, and Salomon Brothers. After the acquisition, he shot off an internal memo to Times Mirror employees, offering soothing words ("It is an honor to welcome you to the Tribune family; my commitment is to show you the respect you deserve for your many accomplishments."), and also a rationale for the buyout ("The newspaper industry is consolidating, and the only way to survive and prosper in the face of this trend is to have greater size and scale."). In a second internal note, lack Fuller stroked his new employees; as a member of the Pulitzer Prize board, he'd been reading their work "with plea-

Los Angeles Tribune

Editorial cartoon, Los Angeles Times, March 14

sure, and at times envy. Your newspaper is one of the beacons of the profession."

o Fuller, in fact, as overseer of all Tribune newspapers, would fall the task of melding the *Times* to the *Tribune* culture. He's well suited for the job: a graduate of Yale Law School; a Pulitzer Prize winner himself for Trib editorials; editor of the paper from 1989 to 1993; book writer, including *News Values: Ideas for an Information Age*, a treatise on the journalist's craft. Fuller hurried to Los Angeles days after the takeover to face the *Times* staff.

"I went out there because I wanted to put a human face on the Tribune Company," he says. "A buyout like this is an anxiety-creating event. It's going to take a good long time for all of us to get to know each other, but I wanted to start that process." Some staffers asked to know more about the *Trib*'s editorial philosophy. "I think I was able to reassure them that we're pretty much journalism fundamentalists about values, and that they have nothing to worry about on that score."

Will Tribune be a hands-on owner, shaping *Times* editorial policies and practices? "I told them I believe that newspapers have to be edited where they live; that they have an intimate connection with their own community, and that running them remotely, from an editorial standpoint, is a fool's game." How about staff reductions? "You have two corporate staffs now; in the end, you'll have one."

Tribune is, indeed, notoriously "efficient" — allergic to waste. The company's profit margin last year was 29.2 percent, the highest of any newspaper company, leaving the behemoths Gannett and Knight Ridder in the dust. (Times Mirror's was 18.2 percent.) Its Marine Corps discipline in controlling costs has made it a lean, mean machine. For three straight years, Tribune has been number one in the industry on Fortune's list of the most-admired companies in America.

Unarguably, the great *Los Angeles Times* will henceforth take its orders from

the Tribune Tower, 1700 miles away. It's suddenly "a vassal state," says Michael Miner, senior editor and media columnist of the Chicago Reader, an alternative weekly; and no matter how much autonomy it gets - or appears to get -Tribune will shape its destiny. Many of Times Mirror's 15,000 employees are finding that depressing. But it could have been worse, Miner muses: e.g., Murdoch or Hollinger (who owns the Chicago Sun-Times). "The Tribune, which has a reputation for taking good journalism seriously, is more likely than almost anybody who might have bought the paper to keep it respectable and important.'

Two schools of thought — at least — confront the question: is the merger good for journalism or bad? Robert Giles, executive director of the Freedom Forum Media Studies Center, argues for the affirmative. His reaction: "very positive" because Tribune is a leader in media technology that permits news distribution across a variety of channels. "This truly has got to be the future of the American

newspaper business."

Well, not exactly, says Consumers Union's Gene Kimmelman, who calls the merger part of "a very, very dangerous trend." If the deal goes through unchallenged Tribune will own newspapers in major markets - New York, Chicago, Los Angeles - where it also owns television stations, in direct violation of long-standing government rules prohibiting such cross-ownership. That constitutes "excessive concentration of power in the local media market that we think ought to be addressed. We're going to oppose it." So will many other consumer activist groups. They'll all be swimming upstream, Kimmelman admits, because there are now more news outlets than ever - cable, satellites, Internet, and countless others on the way via digital broadcasting - so the rule is seen by some as outmoded, unfair, and counterproductive. But, says Kimmelman, "beneath the surface, what's hidden from most citizens, is that a very

ID JOHN HOS ANGELS IMAS BENEVATIO BY PERMISSION.

few large entities have substantial ownership stakes in many of these outlets," and thus exercise undue control over the flow of information.

Tribune's Fuller hotly dissents. The rule is just plain unconstitutional, he says, and the company is ready to fight that premise through the courts, even though the issue may not be crucial until its broadcast licenses come up for renewal around 2006. Tribune has laid this siege before: when it acquired Miami's WBZL-TV in 1999, it was in technical violation because it also owns the Fort Lauderdale Sun-Sentinel in the same market area. Tribune was ready to prosecute the case all the way to the Supreme Court but the FCC came through with a waiver. The company is threatening legal action again if the Times Mirror deal is imperiled.

n digesting Times Mirror, Tribune, has, in effect, steamrolled over all concerns about government restrictions on who can own what. (Broadcast/print combinations are legal, by the way, if they pre-existed the 1975 rule.) "We have made no secret for some time," Fuller says, "that we think the cross-ownership rule is anachronistic and that we're going to challenge it wherever we can. Our position is that we're not just going to sit there and wait until the government decides to act. The world is moving at Internet speed, and we have to move with it." He can derive confidence from knowing that the massed armies — powerful in their collective influence - of both broadcast and newspaper industries are behind them, and so are influential Republican chairmen of relevant committees of Congress: Senator John McCain of Arizona, Senate Commerce Committee; and Representative Billy Tauzin of Louisiana, House Telecommunications Subcommittee. ("The days when network news and big-city editors were the dominant opinion-makers are long over," McCain said last fall when introducing legislation to kill the rule.)

On the Democratic side, President Clinton and Vice-president Gore oppose cross-ownerships, and so do such veteran and passionate Democrat students of telecommunications law as Senator Ernest Hollings of South Carolina and Representative John Dingell of Michigan. Those officials agree with consumer activists that if the government relaxes the ban to suit Tribune, mergers could ensue that would further concentrate power in fewer hands. Thus, this November's election may have an effect on Tribune's grand

news company that's poised to invade the wilder shores of multimedia.

Iournalists differ about the efficacy of spreading their talents thin across three or four media - print, television, online, radio - in the course of a day's work. Is it counterproductive, distracting, inimical to deep, thoughtful reporting and analysis? Former New York Times executive editor A.M. Rosenthal at a recent panel sponsored by the Columbia Graduate School of Journalism declared himself "bothered" by newspersons having to deal with multimedia chores in the crowded hours available to them each day; and he sternly resists the notion of reporters "working for two or three different bosses.'

Multimedia, in truth, is not necessarily the wave of the future for most of the nation's 1500 dailies: it's expensive and complex; the electronic compo-

nents must be firmly in place; the multimedia command post needs a trained team of specialists; and the several staffs must cooperate seamlessly, noncompetitively, and enthusiastically. The experiments so far at Tribune and elsewhere have been promising on the editorial side, but the jury is still out on whether they're good business. At Tribune Interactive alone, which runs Chicagotribune.com, the development losses last year were \$30 to \$35 million, and are estimated by the company as \$40 to \$45 million for 2000.

Another issue: in a transcontinental chain of newspapers feeding each other parts of their daily news and feature output, will local news eventually become a neglected child as editors give shorter shrift to important parochial stories in favor of ones that might interest reader's elsewhere in the country, and fill column inches for sibling papers?

One of those newspapers doesn't exactly fit the vision: Newsday is dominant on Long Island and has a strong presence in Queens but very limited circulation in Manhattan and Brooklyn, and doesn't distribute in the rest of the region - raising the issue: does the paper need to expand in order to fulfill Tribune's grand design? Ironies abound here. Back in 1919, Joseph M. Patterson, grandson of Tribune founder Joseph Medill, created strategy — and on that of every other | the New York Daily News (eventually



Jack Fuller: at meeting with Los Angeles Times staff

dubbed "New York's hometown newspaper") which, by the late 1940s was the top-selling paper in America with 2.5 million copies a day. Forty years later, bad management and bitter union battles had the paper hemorrhaging money by the hundreds of millions of dollars; Tribune peddled it to the eccentric British press lord Robert Maxwell in 1991.

Just four years later, Times Mirror lost its own Manhattan presence when Willes, in a fit of cost-cutting, closed down New York Newsday, a metro version of the paper. Thus, both Tribune and Times Mirror have given up on efforts to run a newspaper in "the city that never sleeps." Will the company try again? That speculation is "premature," says Jack Fuller. But he didn't say no.

Los Angeles is now the largest U.S. city with no locally owned paper. The Tribune deal is the largest newspaper merger in history, bigger than McClatchev's buyout of the Minneapolis Star Tribune (1998) and the New York Times Company's purchase of the Boston Globe (1993). The compact is either a marriage made in heaven — as some analysts have described it - or one more skid down the slippery slope of ominous media agglomerations.

Or both.

Neil Hickey is editor-at-large of CJR.



a small drop of ink, falling like dew upon a thought, produces that which makes thousands.

> perhaps millions, think. ??

> > - Lord Byron

For their courage, compassion and professionalism, the Newspaper Guild/CWA honors our Pulitzer Prize winners

KATHERINE BOO OF THE WASHINGTON POST FOR PUBLIC SERVICE, AS WELL AS THE NEWSPAPER GUILD/CWA'S HEYWOOD BROUN AWARD • HENRY ALLEN OF THE WASHINGTON POST FOR CRITICISM • GEORGE DOHRMANN OF THE ST. PAUL PIONEER PRESS FOR BEAT REPORTING • CAROL GUZY AND LUCIAN PERKINS OF THE WASHINGTON POST FOR FEATURE PHOTOGRAPHY . CHARLES J. HANLEY AND MARTHA MENDOZA OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FOR INVESTIGATIVE REPORTING • STAFF OF THE DENVER POST FOR BREAKING NEWS REPORTING • STAFF OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAIN NEWS FOR Breaking News Photography • STAFF OF THE WALL STREET JOURNAL FOR NATIONAL REPORTING



THE TAMPA TRIBUNE NEWSROOM FLOOR

Opening ceremonies: visitors view multimedia area and atrium

"SUPERDESK"
TELEVISION NEWSROOM
INTERNET

WFLA TV STUDIOS

FLOOR BELOW

CJR COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

one year (six issues) \$27.95

Add \$4 for foreign subscription.

□ bill me

Name

☐ check enclosed

Address

City, State, Zip

B834



BUSINESS REPLY MAIL FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 65 MT. MORRIS, IL

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM

hlloodillooldalallollollollollodlodl





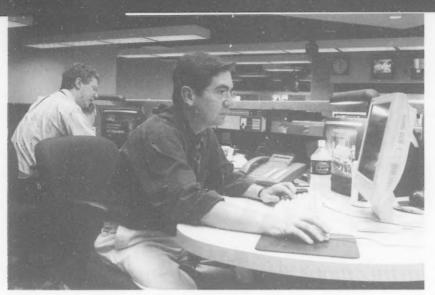
THE MULTIMEDIA **NEWSROOM**

Three Organizations Aim For Convergence In Newly Designed Tampa Headquarters

BY ALY COLÓN

ocky Glisson, an assignment editor for WFLA-TV, Tampa Bay's NBC affiliate, occupies Athe "hot seat" on the oval-shaped "superdesk" at Media General's Newscenter facility. From his perch, on the top level of a three-tiered, starship-like deck that rises several feet from the second floor, he surveys a state-of-the-art newsroom that hugs the Hillsborough River, visible through the newsroom's glass walls. He also can see and





In the "hot seat": morning assignment editor Rocky Glisson begins the day at 4 A.M.

talk to reporters, producers, photographers, and editors who stop by, their voices floating upward through a wide atrium toward the third floor where the staff of the *Tampa Tribune* newspaper works.

The words "hot seat" and "superdesk" represent just the most obvious descriptions for this futuristic news desk, one designed from the outset to serve a multimedia mission. It includes not only Media General's TV newspeople, but those from its daily newspaper and online site as well.

he idea of converging operations isn't new. Back in the 1950s, some newspapers owned television stations and shared news functions. But the move by Media General speaks of a much broader approach. Rather than having their newspeople working for just one medium, the company sees possibilities for converging their different news operations and thereby multiplying the number of platforms through which they distribute the news simultaneously. For the convergence of the physical mediums of the computer and television to take place in such a way as to provide substantive news content, it will need to be accompanied by a multimedia newsroom.

Is Tampa's Newscenter the newsroom of the future? If it is, it means substantive changes in the way journalists do their jobs.

This particular spring morning, for example, Glisson keeps glancing at four-teen TV monitors that stretch across the wall book-ended by two large clocks. His ears stay tuned to seven scanners just in front of him, and to the multi-line phone nearby.

As he does his morning monitoring, he gets tipped off to a broken water main gushing during a drought and water restriction period in Tampa. He alerts one of his photographers to check it out and confirm the information. Then he tells Doug Anderson, WFLA's assignment manager, who shares the top deck with him.

Anderson assigns a WFLA reporter and photojournalist so they can get video for the morning and evening news blocks, and he tells the producers about it at WFLA's 9 a.m. news meeting. He also tips off the newspaper's photo team leader, Todd Chappel, who sits below, on the second deck on the superdesk. Chappel in turn sends one of his photographers to snap a shot for the next day's newspaper edition.

Steve De Gregorio, who sits next to Chappel, makes a note to pass the information on to the *Tribune's* editors at the newspaper's 10:30 A.M. budget meeting. As the multimedia editor, he's the liaison between WFLA, the *Tribune*, and TBO.com (Tampa Bay Online). He scrolls through the news budgets of the three organizations, looking for additional opportunities of convergence.

Just down the desk from De Gregorio, Jim Riley, TBO.com's interim content editor — online's equivalent of a TV news director or a newspaper managing editor — stops by to talk to his staffers on the superdesk. They update news for MSNBC and remain alert for ideas they can use on their Web site.

Glisson glances about, monitoring the activity. "This is quite a different newsroom from the one I came into twenty-eight years ago," he says, his tone underscoring just what an understatement that is.

The new, \$40 million, 120,000 square foot, temple of convergence is Media General's answer to the challenge of the future, establishing the Richmond-based company's Florida gulf coast news outlets as the dominant source of information in the Tampa Bay market.

They face stiff competition. Tampa Bay, the nation's thirteenth largest television market, includes such news competitors as CBS's WTSP-TV, Fox's WTVT-TV, and ABC's WFTS-TV, as well as the St. Petersburg Times just across the bay. (The Poynter Institute,

which I am employed by, a nonprofit school for journalists, owns the *St. Petersburg Times*, but operates separately from the newspaper.) But Media General's local news executives see this convergence as their opportunity to bigfoot them all. While WFLA, the *Tribune*, and TBO.com maintain separate newsrooms and make their own individual news decisions about coverage, they hope that sharing the same space will lead to a synaptic intimacy that creates a pervasive, powerful presence.

"The work," says Gil Thelen, the *Tribune*'s executive editor and vice president, who notes he was the chairman of the ASNE change committee in the mid-1990s, is "just what my career prepared me for over the past twenty years. Now I have the big one."

Other news organizations, such as the Tribune Company (see previous story), the A.H. Belo Corp., KUSA-TV in Denver, and the Denver Post, the Orange County Register, and the Sarasota Herald Tribune, have either shared resources, formed partnerships, and/or offered crossover news between television, newspapers, and online sites. But Tampa's approach appears to be the first such attempt to put all three news mediums in one place at one time. They plan intentionally, and strategically, to increase the opportunities for each of them to not only work with, but also work within, each of the other's setting. And they'll be working with each other constantly, every minute of every day.

These interrelationships began before they moved in together during the early part of March, when both the ninetytwo-member WFLA staff and the approximately 210 *Tribune* news and editorial staff shifted all their people and equipment without missing a deadline. And it shows itself in different ways.

Tribune newspaper reporters appear on, and prepare packages for, WFLA-TV. WFLA-TV reporters write by-lined stories that appear in the Tribune. TBO.com creates additional news information that allows viewers and readers to drill for even more detailed and widespread information and links, enhancing the credibility of its Web site by displaying on TBO's opening screen the WFLA logo and

the *Tampa Tribune* flag, both of which have broad recognition and reputations in the Tampa Bay marketplace.

The TBO.com operation welcomes the opportunity to go beyond "shovelware," the reusing of information already provided on TV or in the newspaper, hoping that its stronger information base will lead to more creative



Television studios: Newspaper reporters make frequent appearances here, two floors below their newsroom

breaking news — use the paging system or an intranet setup — to the core news values and practices each believe in.

"An ongoing concern is how to integrate the entrepreneur into a traditional culture," Thelen says. "This will be a challenge for the company to adjust to. We want to place a high value on experit went through an editor, citing credibility concerns. Meanwhile, TBO's Riley wondered what took priority on the Web.

Right now, the three, while trying to work together, act more like unilateral news organizations rather than converged ones, says De Gregorio, the multimedia editor. Each news organization tends to think of itself first, and then, if it remembers, the other two. Currently, the television and newspaper voices dominate the convergence conversation, with the online operation looking for a place to fit in. For De Gregorio, a former TV executive producer, the three organizations resemble the legs of TV camera tripod. "We're a tripod with one leg not lockable," he says, referring to the challenge facing the smaller and less experienced online news operation.

The expectation is that eventually all three partners will contribute equally to the process. "It's not whose idea it is, it's who's in the best position to drive the story," that should determine who takes the lead, says *Tribune* managing editor Donna Reed. Meanwhile, the three news organizations strive to adopt a musketeer approach. But this one for all and all for one attitude is bound to find some bumps along the way.

"Convergence is a contact sport," Thelen says. "It happens one staff collision at a time."

'WE WANT TO PLACE A HIGH VALUE ON EXPERIMENTAL RISK-TAKING RATHER THAN THE TRIED AND TRUE'

news presentations. WFLA welcomes the additional staff on the newspaper that can be called upon to help them keep up with the news in the Tampa television market of almost 1.5 million households. The *Tribune* sees the benefit of getting wider exposure within, and outside, its own circulation area, which in March totaled 245,246 daily, and 336,203 on Sunday.

Il this enthusiasm comes tempered with the philosophical and cultural challenges the integration of these different mediums must address. In the weeks before the move, representatives from the television station, the newspaper, and the online site began gathering at what they've dubbed "prenuptial" meetings, meetings designed to smooth out any differences and pave the way toward happy union.

Discussions during these sessions have ranged from specific, logistical arrangements for alerting everyone to imental risk-taking, rather than on the tried and true journalism story."

The conversations have been wideranging and passionate: their goal to become a unified, dominant information source for Tampa Bay challenged by the differences in their approach. How different became evident during one prenuptial discussion on the way they might cover a future hotel shooting spree similar to one that occurred a few months ago at a local Radisson and left several people dead.

Dan Bradley, WFLA's news director, trying to envision such a scenario, saw the opportunity for the reporter who first arrives on that kind of a shooting scene to let television and newspaper know immediately. The reporter could then file something, if reliable, directly to the online site. But Lawrence Fletcher, the *Tribune*'s senior editor for news, questioned whether he would be comfortable putting anything online before

Aly Colón is on the ethics faculty at The Poynter Institute for Media Studies in St. Petersburg, Florida. He has worked as an editor and reporter at The Seattle Times.

Making it Pullizors

for newspapers contributing to the

Los Angeles Times-Washington Post News Service



J.R. Moehringer of the Los Angeles Times received the feature-writing Pulitzer for his piece on proposed development in Gee's Bend, Ala., home to a number of slave descendants.



The Washington Post won the public service Pulitzer for reporter Katherine Boo's report on the Washington, D.C. government's treatment of the mentally retarded.



Washington Post photographers Carol Guzy, Lucian Perkins and Michael Williamson were awarded the Pulitzer for feature photography for their coverage of the war in Kosovo.



The Pulitzer for criticism went to Henry Allen of The Washington Post for writing on photography.

Los Angeles Times The Washington Post

1150 15th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20071-0070 Phone 202-334-6173 Fax 202-334-5096 Latwp@newsservice.com www.newsservice.com

A PUBLISHER'S LIFE

In the Lab

BY BRENT CUNNINGHAM

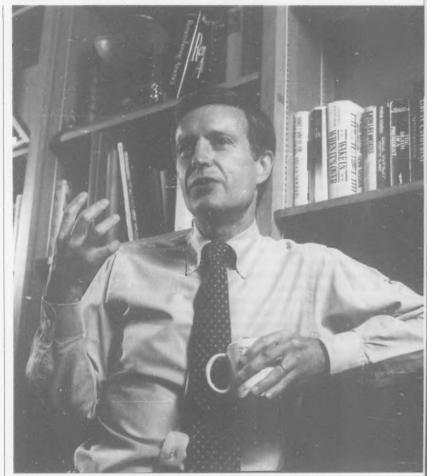
hen Reid Ashe was growing up outside Charlotte, North Carolina, he didn't have a paper route or start his own neighborhood newspaper. Instead, he built and dismantled radios, learned telegraph code, and tinkered with electronics.

Forty years later, the tinkering continues, only now the stakes are much higher. As publisher of the *Tampa Tribune*, Ashe, 51, has just overseen the building of a new, \$40 million head-quarters designed around a multimedia vision of the future. What he calls his "laboratory" may be the future of newspapers, or it may "be obsolete in three years," as he says.

Ashe seems unlikely in the role of journalistic mad scientist, but he doesn't immediately make you think c.e.o. either. Tall, reed-thin, with a shock of dark hair going gray at the temples, he is the embodiment of dignified reserve. Still, an oft-told story on Ashe is how once, during an editorial board meeting when he was publisher of *The Wichita Eagle*, he cursed, balled up a press release and threw it at the feet of Wichita's mayor, who was complaining about the paper's coverage.

Ashe is described variously as Socratic, introverted, exceptionally sharp, and a true southern gentleman. But years later, in another town, people still revisit that one incident in his career when, as he puts it, "I lost it." Perhaps because it's the exception that proves the rule. "I'm scared of losing control," Ashe says, "so I try not to do that. Maybe that's just who I am. I can't control other people, so I control myself. The leaders I've admired do that."

If Ashe fears losing control, he also seems to thrive on testing it. Ashe got his pilot's license in college and now describes his six-seat Piper Aztec as "the family station wagon." He often flies it to



Reid Ashe in Tampa office: beginning a new journalistic experiment

his scuba diving trips, like the one last month on Little Cayman Island in the Caribbean. More important, he has made a career of gamely pushing into the journalistic wilderness, challenging traditional approaches despite skepticism and mixed results. "In the newsroom it was always the scientific method with Reid," says Steven A. Smith, who was managing editor under Ashe in Wichita. "He would let us take any idea

and run with it, and if it proved itself, fine, if not it was on to something else."

Ashe took an unconventional path to newspapering. The only child of older parents, he grew up comfortably middle class in Belmont, North Carolina. His father had a successful business selling textile machinery, his mother managed the home and helped with the family business. The self-control came naturally. "My parents were a little reserved, but

they weren't cold," he says. "Self-reliance was important to them."

When it came time for college, he went to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and studied electrical engineering. It was the late '60s, and things were somewhat livelier on campus than they had been in Belmont. Friends persuaded him to come work for one of the student newspapers. "I realized that engineering was interesting," Ashe recalls, "but journalism was consuming."

A few months after graduating in 1970, he landed a reporting job at the Washington, North Carolina, *Daily News*. Four months later, Ashe went to *The Jackson Sun*, then a 32,000-circulation daily in western Tennessee. By the time he was twenty-five, Ashe was executive editor of the *Sun*. At twenty-nine, he was publisher. "I remember people saying I was too young to be publisher," he says. "They don't say that anymore."

His rapid rise was impressive. But his next move was even more pivotal. In 1984, when Ashe was all of thirty-five, James Batten, the chairman of Knight Ridder, tapped him to run Viewtron, the company's \$50 million stab at revolutionizing news delivery. The two had met when Ashe, still at MIT, interviewed for a job at *The Charlotte Observer*. "I was pretty well-suited for it," Ashe says now of the Viewtron job. "I could serve as a bridge between the technology folks and the newspaper folks."

fter a run of success, Viewtron gave Ashe a taste of defeat. Viewtron was a precursor to Internet services like America Online that today we take for granted. In addition to ondemand news, Viewtron had chat rooms, e-mail, even a reverse auction called BidQuick. But the project labored under exorbitant costs (it preceded the personal computer revolution, and required custom-made software, and subscribers had to be outfitted with interface boxes for their televisions) and what Ashe calls a misperception about what people really wanted from such a service. Two years later, Knight Ridder abandoned Viewtron. With the support of Batten, his new mentor, Ashe moved on to be publisher in Wichita where he would stay for the next ten years. But his philosophy about newspapers and where they were headed remained grounded in what he gleaned from his Viewtron experience.

For one thing, Ashe noticed that the handful of Viewtron subscribers who stuck around long enough eventually gravitated to the communal features of the service: chat rooms, e-mail, interactive games. It was this insight that opened Ashe to public journalism, then a new idea emerging in newspaper circles. "It taught me that the value of news is not in the news itself," he says, "but in the ability to bind us together as a community and serve our common interests and concerns."

Wichita was fertile ground for these new ideas. With Batten paving the way at corporate, and Davis "Buzz" Merritt, Jr., the *Eagle*'s editor, trying to make it happen in the newsroom, the *Eagle* became a public journalism pioneer in the early 1990s. "Reid immediately understood the significance and potential of the whole public journalism thing," says Merritt. Together they explored "community con-

EVEN AFTER THIRTY YEARS OF JOURNALISM THE INNER ENGINEER IS STRONG IN ASHE

nectedness," a controversial approach that still raises hackles among journalists.

But election projects, community forums, and other public journalism experiments were just part of Ashe's tinkering in Wichita. He created an entrepreneurial wing that focused primarily on book and periodical publishing. From 1991 until Knight Ridder scuttled it in 1996, the *Eagle*'s development department, as it was called, churned out some fifty books, mostly sports handbooks on bigname college programs, but also things like *Wichita Alive and Well*, a health and fitness magazine. It also produced compact discs of traditional music from the region.

Ashe also dismantled the copy desk and created "content teams," which then handled their own copy editing. The results were mixed. Ashe concedes that "the quality control over the finer points of copy editing slipped," and the approach was later abandoned. Still, he talks about it like a scientist wistfully recounting an experiment that didn't quite turn out. "It was a fascinating exercise," he says. "We solved some problems, but we created others."

Wichita's problems, however, were bigger than Ashe's tinkering. Circulation dropped and profit pressures tightened in a state that was losing population. In 1994, the *Eagle* endured the first layoffs

in the paper's history. There were acrimonious union negotiations. In an effort to cut costs, Ashe dropped home delivery to 10,000 subscribers in the farthest reaches of the circulation area — a controversial move for a paper that considered itself the newspaper of Kansas. It all took its toll on Ashe. "I know the situation was wearing him down," Smith says. "I don't know any publisher who could survive under those conditions. After a while you just sort of lose heart."

If he lost heart, he remained a motivational leader. Sheri Dill, a vice president for marketing at the Eagle, says she once researched whether offering a subscription premium — like a coffee mug or an umbrella - would boost sales. Her research concluded that it made no difference, yet when the next circulation push began it included a premium. Dill went to Ashe to find out why. "He said, 'You know, Sheri, sometimes the salespeople just need something to sell, a gimmick, a fresh pitch.' I came to see Reid do this kind of thing a lot," she says. "He would subject the numbers to an intellectual and emotional sniff test, and then make decisions that weren't always backed up by the numbers."

In 1994, Batten was diagnosed with a brain tumor. He died the next year. Ashe—like many others in Knight Ridder—suddenly found himself without the man who had helped guide his career for nearly a decade. "Without Jim Batten, I felt like I had no future in the company," he says. In 1996, Ashe went to Tampa to be publisher of the *Tribune*.

The Tribune's parent company, Richmond-based Media General, owns twenty-one - mostly small - daily newspapers in Virginia, North Carolina, and Florida, and fourteen television stations. With a circulation of about 235,000, the Tribune is the company's largest paper. Last year, Media General had one of the highest profit margins (33.4 percent) of any publicly owned newspaper company, according to John Morton, a media analyst. But it also has a reputation for giving local publishers considerable autonomy. The company hasn't exactly embraced the concept of public journalism that is at the core of Ashe's philosophy. "In fact," says Ashe, "the chairman, Stewart Bryan, is skeptical of what has been called public journalism. But he believes in community service and strong, vigorous journalism, which is at the heart of good journalism no matter what you call it."

Now, from his spacious office in

downtown Tampa, Ashe looks out at his latest experiment: The News Center, Media General's \$40 million entry into convergence media. Ashe is as excited about it as a kid with a new chemistry set. "I have this great laboratory next door with opportunities you won't find in most places," he says. "But everything we see in new media today is going to be obsolete in three years. So the first thing you have to do is accept the fact that the future is unpredictable and consider the human needs of the people you are serving. Why do people read newspapers? Why do they watch TV news? Why do they go to one place on the Internet and not another? We are social animals. What we're looking for are linkages to

'WE ARE SOCIAL ANIMALS. WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR ARE LINKAGES TO ONE ANOTHER'

one another."

Gil Thelen, his editor and partner in innovation, says Ashe is particularly suited to oversee this convergence laboratory: "He tolerates smart risk-taking. That's essential because this is a work in progress." As evidence, Thelen points to their decision to create the paper's next zoned edition online rather than in print. "It means we will scoop ourselves online with stories that will then run a few days later in the paper," he says.

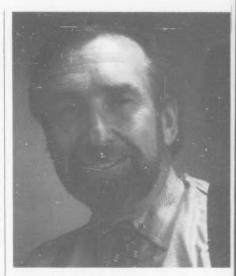
Thelen, who like Ashe was greatly influenced by Batten during his nearly twenty years as an editor at Knight Ridder papers, sees in his current boss the same kind of "servant-leader" qualities that Batten exemplified. "If you come to Reid with an idea that is logical, practical, and attainable, he will do everything in his power to help you get it done," he says. As Thelen has gone about moving the Tribune newsroom away from a traditional beat structure to one that is more issue-oriented, he says, Ashe has worked his magic at corporate to get the kind of reporting and editing talent he needs. "I hadn't anticipated how really, really good he is at managing corporate," says Thelen. "In fact, what I knew about him at Knight Ridder was that he stood his ground with corporate and sometimes got into trouble. Here, he stands his ground but doesn't get into trouble."

Still, Thelen sometimes wants to see a bit more of the old Wichita temper from Ashe. "The flip side of his diplomacy and courtliness is that he doesn't always drop the hammer real hard. There are times I want him to bang his shoe on the table."

It's not as if the Tampa years have been without turmoil. As in Wichita, Ashe has had to cut back circulation in outlying areas, a process that began before he arrived. Their rival across the bay, the St. Petersburg Times, continues to try to muscle in on the Tribune's turf. Then there was the situation with Tom McEwen, longtime Tribune columnist whose travel agency did business with the Tampa teams he wrote about. When the situation came to light, Ashe and Thelen took heat from their peers for not cutting McEwen loose, especially after McEwen failed to immediately end the business dealings. (Ashe now says the agency no longer does business with the teams). When the subject comes up, Ashe displays those diplomatic skills Thelen mentioned, "Tom's career was in another era when there was another set of rules. He is a much-beloved figure in town, he writes a very popular column." The plan now is to have a farewell bash for McEwen at next year's Super Bowl, which is in Tampa, and that will mark the end of his work for the Tribune.

she starts most days with a run, four or five miles on the streets near the home in residential Tampa he shares with wife, Lisa who is also a journalist - and their two sons, ages eleven and fourteen. He gets to work around eight and leaves around seven. In between, he says, he spends his time talking to people. Mondays start with a department head meeting around the small table in Ashe's office. At nine there is a weekly conference call with his boss, Graham Woodlief, Jr., president of Media General's publishing operations, and the other publishers who report to Woodlief. "We share problems and ideas, it's a team-building process," Ashe says of the call. Monday afternoons there is a similar conference call with all Media General's Florida publishers. He drops in irregularly on news and editorial board meetings, occasionally schmoozes with advertisers but leaves the deals to the sales folks. As a rule, he doesn't read stories before they go into the paper.

Even after thirty years of journalism, the inner engineer is strong in Ashe. He subscribes to *Scientific American* and is still a member of the Institute of Electrical



Editor Gil Thelen: lab partner

and Electronic Engineers. He organizes his life on a Palm Pilot, and confesses, when pressed, to having a flight simulator on his home computer. His science background still makes him something of a curiosity in the business. "Journalists are generally right-brain people, and Reid is a left-brain guy," says Janet Weaver, who was a managing editor under Ashe in Wichita and now is executive editor at the Sarasota Herald-Tribune. "In meetings, people would be debating something passionately and Reid would be kicked back in his chair with this distant look on his face, and we all would be wondering if he was even paying attention. Then he spoke and you realized that not only had he been listening, but he had taken what everyone was saying and synthesized it into something no one had even considered."

Ashe smiles when told of Weaver's memory of him. "I think a great deal of Janet," is his only response. He seems uncomfortable discussing his intellect and unconventional ways. Perhaps, like a real scientist, he would prefer to be left alone with his experiments. Or maybe just steal away in his plane, or lose himself in the solitude of a dive among the coral. He says he suffers the social aspects of being publisher as "part of the job," and does only as much as he has to. It's the control thing at work again. "One of the things I've learned is that when you are in a leadership position, people watch you very closely," he says. "So maybe I've learned to watch what I say."

Brent Cunningham is an assistant editor at CIR.

PUBLISHERS AND EDITORS

THE MOST IMPORTANT RELATIONSHIP

BY BRENT CUNNINGHAM

ich Oppel, the editor of the Austin American-Statesman, once had a publisher tell him to stop investigating a major advertiser. Oppel threatened to quit, but did not. "Cowardice," he says, explaining why he didn't follow through. "As an editor, you wind up looking principle and pragmatism squarely in the eye. You just can't quit over everything."

Principle vs. pragmatism. News values vs. business values. This dilemma of the modern newspaper is embodied in the relationship between editors and publishers, arguably the most important relationship at a newspaper in terms of the quality of journalism that ultimately gets done. Together, the editor and publisher set and articulate the paper's values, its vision, and its strategy. "This is the crucial relationship at a newspaper," says Larry Jinks, former editor and publisher at the San Jose Mercury News. "It must be a true partnership, where there is power on both sides."

If most situations never reach the kind of showdown that Oppel faced, this relationship is all about striking a delicate balance. "There is no way of avoiding the sensitive nature of it," says Oppel, who declined to name the publisher or provide details, but said it happened before he came to Austin. "We operate in a business with built-in conflicts you don't find elsewhere: the profit goal and the goal of serving the reader. If you vigorously pursue the latter there will be unavoidable conflicts with the former."

Most daily newspapers are publicly owned, but even under private ownership, there is still a business culture and a news culture. Chris Waddle, executive editor of the privately owned Anniston Star in Alabama, gets along well with his



Classic partnership: Washington Post executive editor Ben Bradlee and publisher Katharine Graham in 1972 photo after winning court victory in the Pentagon Papers case

that they are entering their eighteenth year together. Still, Waddle says most editor-publisher relationships are "based on fear. The publisher is afraid of how much the newsroom will cost him, and the editor is just plain afraid because the other guy holds the purse strings." The difference in his case, he says, is that he and Avers share a love for and commitment to the community. "That's what these relationships should be based on."

The consequences of dysfunctional editor-publisher relationships are all around us lately. The Staples Center debacle at the Los Angeles Times was the result, at least in part, of a publisher who didn't share the values of the newsroom and who didn't communicate with the editor until it was too late. The publisher, Kathryn Downing, has said that she was publisher, Brandt Ayers. So well, in fact, | trying to respect the so-called wall |

between business and editorial. But it is precisely at that intersection that business and editorial must meet.

More recently, The Daily Oklahoman gave us a classic case of an irreconcilable clash of values between a reformist, liberal editor, Stan Tiner, and an entrenched, conservative publisher-owner, Edward L. Gaylord. When Martha Steffens - another risk-taking editor - bolted the Press & Sun-Bulletin in Binghamton, New York, last November, she cited "deep philosophical differences" with her publisher, William Monopoli. And in January, Steven Smith resigned as editor of The Gazette in Colorado Springs after a publisher Smith had worked well with was promoted, and Smith's new boss "had a different set of perceptions on content and business strategies," according to Smith's published comments in the wake of his departure.

Firings and conflict-fueled resignations are rare. Most editor-publisher relationships absorb the occasional crisis, find ways to cope with the inherent friction, and continue to function, however imperfectly.

It is telling, though, that in most of these recent cases, when the smoke cleared it was the editor who was gone. Tiner, who would not discuss his falling out in Oklahoma, said editors elsewhere serve at "the whims of the publishing gods. If the editor and publisher don't get along, you can win a point here and there, but if you reach a situation where the disagreement is fundamental, then the editor is the one who leaves." Gene Roberts, former editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer*, says that wasn't always the case: "There has been a shift in the balance of power."

The relationship has changed because the news business has changed. It has become more business-like, complete with sophisticated marketing techniques perfected in corporate America. And the qualities that make a good journalist do not necessarily make a good c.e.o. Not so long ago, publisher meant owner. Newspaper families generally were invested in the communities their papers covered beyond simply owning a nice house in the suburbs and a country club membership. "If you have the right publisher, the paper is not just their toy, it's their reason for living," says Ben Bradlee, the former Washington Post editor who, along with Katharine Graham, formed one of the more successful and storied editor-publisher partnerships. But even in what many consider the classic relationship, managing it often took quirky and decidedly human turns. When Graham came to Bradlee with complaints about the paper, he would often ferret out who Graham had been socializing with in Washington's power circles, in

'MOST OF THESE RELATIONSHIPS ARE BASED ON FEAR.'

Chris Waddle, executive editor, *The Anniston Star*

an effort to determine the source, and thus the credibility, of the criticism. "If she came to me more than once about something, I tried to find out where it was coming from," says Bradlee. "It wasn't insidious. She knew I did it. Good journalists want to get at the root of things."

Today, publishers are often local representatives of large media companies based elsewhere. They are on their way somewhere else in the company, and are in town to fix something, to make the paper more efficient. Increasingly, publishers are not harvested from the newsroom. Mike Walker, of the headhunting firm Youngs Walker & Co., says most media companies today want publishers from what he calls the "revenue" side of the business. "Years ago it was nearly a requirement that publishers have newsside experience," he says. "Now, I don't see that very often. The biggest change is that publishers today spend a lot of time dealing with strategic matters, trying to get a jump on where the industry is going, looking at synergistic opportunities with organizations that, frankly, would have been sworn enemies not long ago."

The rise of electronic media threatens newspapers' advertising base and has created an on-demand market for news and information that has forced newspapers to rethink their role. "The pace of change in the industry is breathtaking," says Oppel, who, as the incoming president of the American Society of Newspaper Editors, is

making newsroom leadership the theme of his tenure. "The business model is changing rapidly, and I am constantly getting into gray areas where I must make decisions without real precedent." For example, the *American-Statesman* recently partnered with a rival, *The Dallas Morning News*, to produce a special section on high-tech business recruitment. "The ads are commonly sold by both papers and both papers produce pages for it," he says. "Is it the right thing to do? I think it is, but the key is disclosure. How do I explain that to my reporters? How do we explain it to the readers?"

As the publisher's job has changed, so has the editor's. "Marketing can no longer be a dirty word to an editor," says Walker. "The purists are somewhat disappearing." In the new corporate culture, editors and the newsrooms they guard have lost ground to business demands. As Geneva Overholser, former editor of The Des Moines Register, wrote in the American Journalism Review's "State of the American Newspaper" project, editors have had to become marketers, number crunchers, compromisers, money-makers, corporate creatures, and troublemakers. The problem with this, as Martha Steffens points out, is that there are quantifiable ways to measure success in advertising and circulation, but not in the newsroom. "There it is all about intuitiveness and trust and a feel for the market," she says.

This is not to say that all publishers are dispassionate bean-counters and all editors dispirited department heads. Their jobs have changed in the last twenty-five years, but at the core of the relationship remain two people, and therein lie the keys to both the success and the failure of these relationships. There are as many different editor-publisher relationships as there are editors and publishers. Gil Thelen, executive editor and







ADVICE

PUBLISHERS TO EDITORS

In every newspaper there are daily questions of where we draw the line on any number of issues. There has got to be an understanding that the editor is a colleague in these discussions but that he or she also has a special role.

Donald Graham, publisher, The Washington Post

It's important for editors to share everything they feel their publisher needs to know, and to trust in the publisher's ability to do the right thing. Where conflict can occur is when issues are held back until big decisions need to be made in the heat of the moment. An editor who is informed about the business side of things is in a much better position to make news judgments.

John Puerner, publisher, Los Angeles Times

Know the difference between "need" and "want." Don't waste too much capital on arguing for resources that would be nice but not essential. Get allies. Your chances of success are greatly enhanced if the advertising director or circulation director also supports your position because more ads or newspapers can be sold because of it.

Mike Waller, publisher, Baltimore Sun

Talk to the publisher regularly, even daily, about the paper. Be familiar with the company's business strategy. Make sure you're an integral part of its development. Meet your budget commitments.

Alberto Ibargüen, publisher, The Miami Herald

Publishers don't like to admit it but they want to be liked and respected by their editors. Editors need to reach out and make publishers feel welcome and let them share in journalistic victories. The more they share and take ownership the greater the understanding and embracing of journalistic values and investment.

Frank Blethen, publisher, The Seattle Times

First, be good at what you do. Establish trust with your publisher. The publisher can fire you if you aren't doing your job, but he or she can't fire you over disagreements. You're supposed to have an opinion of your own. It is an equal relationship but one that must be balanced carefully.

Katharine Graham, former publisher, The Washington Post

vice president of the *Tampa Tribune*, likens it to a marriage. "It's best when you choose each other," he says. "When it's arranged, it's a great challenge."

efore she-was hired as executive managing editor in Binghamton, Martha Steffens spent hours talking newspaper philosophy with then publisher Bernard Griffin. They found common ground in their commitment to community journalism. "He and I understood each other very well," says Steffens. When Griffin left for the Springfield, Missouri, News-Leader in 1998, Steffens — who by then had been promoted to editor and had taken classes from Gannett on how to work with publishers - wasn't consulted on who her new boss would be. "That's how Gannett works," she says. "The new publisher just arrives, and you are introduced. Bill [Monopoli] and I didn't get a chance to know each other the way Bernie and I did."

Communication is crucial. From regular, honest, two-way communication flow all the things that make a successful editor-publisher relationship possible. Donald Graham, publisher of The Washington Post, has breakfast each Tuesday with Post editor Len Downie. At the Sarasota Herald-Tribune, publisher Diane McFarlin and executive editor Janet Weaver exchange e-mail and phone messages daily, and visit each other when they can. In Orlando, John Puerner, the Sentinel's publisher since 1993 (he left last month to be publisher of the Los Angeles Times), wore a path in the carpet between his office and editor John Haile's, next door. "He was in here half a dozen times a day," Haile says. Once or twice a year the Sentinel's editorial board retreats somewhere for a day to talk. The idea is to develop a philosophical framework that guides the paper editorially as issues arise. "It was really helpful to me when I first arrived," says Puerner. "It allowed me to share my feelings and ideas and hear their views and let them explain the views of this community." Says David Greenfield, publisher of The Repository in Canton, Ohio: "More than any other of my department heads, I have to know the editor personally. I have to understand his priorities, his thought processes. I've got to trust him and he has to trust me, because any given day he could be my ruination."

Then there is the "no-surprises" rule. "Keep me informed on the really big stuff, but don't bury me in minutiae," says Mike Waller, publisher at the *Sun* in

Baltimore. "That doesn't mean the editor has to ask my permission, just keep me informed. If we are about to accuse someone in a front-page story of doing something illegal, I expect him to pick up the phone and let me know that's coming."

Communication helps foster the mutual respect and trust necessary for a true partnership. "If the editor and publisher trust and respect each other you can do a lot," says David Hall, former editor of Cleveland's Plain Dealer, who departed over differences with his publisher. "Without that, you've got a recipe that will guarantee a mediocre paper." When a newspaper breaks a big story particularly one that involves accusing powerful people or organizations of wrongdoing - there usually is a point at which the publisher decides to trust the editor's judgment. In the Pentagon Papers story, The New York Times was already under court order not to publish, and The Washington Post's lawyers were telling Katharine Graham she shouldn't, either. Ben Bradlee, meanwhile, was telling her she had to publish. "It was a pretty well-illuminated fork in the road," says Bradlee. "Kay decided to print, but God knows what would have happened if we had ended up in jail. You're only wrong once in this relationship."

In Charlotte in 1988, when the Observer toppled evangelist Jim Bakker and his PTL ministry, then editor Rich Oppel was ready to run a story that said Bakker paid more than \$200,000 in hush money to his secretary, Jessica Hahn. PTL was already boycotting Knight Ridder papers, and Oppel says the losses were big enough that top company executives had taken notice. Publisher Rolfe Neill told Oppel that if he was wrong about the hush-money allegation, it would take the paper a decade to recover. "But he left the call to me," says Oppel, "and we were right."

Both the editor and the publisher must be secure enough with themselves and in their roles to accept, even encourage, challenges from the other. At the *Tampa Tribune*, publisher Reid Ashe hired Thelen in part because he would challenge him. "Gil is the kind of personality who will encourage me to question myself, challenge me in constructive ways," says Ashe. "If he gets me to see something more clearly and I change my mind as a result, then I win, too."

In Sarasota, Janet Weaver and Diane McFarlin are feeling their way into new roles as editor and publisher respectively,

ADVICE

EDITORS TO PUBLISHERS

Trust your editor. Share lots of information. Listen hard. Work toward common ground. But be prepared to disagree. Encourage the editor to speak out for journalistic values. Create a culture where that voice is rewarded, not derided. (And for editors: Be smart. Pick your fights.)

Rich Oppel, editor, Austin American-Statesman

Understand that editors want the paper to be profitable. We are not immune to the understanding that the paper must make money to do the journalism we want to do. Editors are always weighing that imperative with the journalistic imperative. I've never labored under the delusion that I worked for a charity.

Janet Weaver, executive editor, Sarasota Herald-Tribune

Publishers must understand this isn't a perfect world. There will be days when things are screwed up. Mistakes get made in newsrooms, and the key is how you deal with them. If the publisher lights off every time this happens, then that relationship won't work.

John Haile, editor, The Orlando Sentinel

If you don't really love what journalism is all about, then you should find some other career.

Harry Rosenfeld, former editor, Albany Times Union

Publishers [should] come to discussions of the news report as informed, vigorous readers of the paper, not as the chief ad salesperson. I don't think some publishers even read their own papers. They maintain way too much detachment.

Paul Tash, editor and president, St. Petersburg Times

Spend time in the newsroom, so much time that your appearance won't cause rumbles, won't surprise or scare anyone, including the editor. Too many publishers, encouraged by scared editors, consider the newsroom off-limits and that distance breeds misunderstandings.

Steve Smith, recently resigned editor, The Gazette in Colorado Springs

Always come through the newsroom on election night. Because it is the High Holidays of the newsroom. But don't stay.

Cole Campbell, departing editor, St. Louis Post-Dispatch

acutely aware of how their close relationship — forged over the two years that McFarlin was editor and Weaver her managing editor - is being tested. "Frankly, there are parts of it that scare me," says Weaver, "I don't like or want to disagree with Diane, but her view is a more global one now and my job is to advocate for the newsroom. If I'm going to serve her well, I must represent the newsroom vigorously." The change hit home for Weaver last fall when they started the budget process. In a meeting with other department heads and company executives, Weaver says McFarlin began grilling her "pretty aggressively" on the newsroom budget. "I didn't have all the answers and I knew she did," recalls Weaver. "It was the first time I looked at her and thought, 'Oh yeah, she really is the publisher.' It was uncomfortable." McFarlin's take on the meeting: "I have a different role to play now. I have totally stepped away from the newsroom. I felt it was important to signal to the newsroom that I wasn't going to be a ghost editor."

ut the strength of the relationship being tested is what can ultimately see them through. Says Weaver: "If I had the type of publisher who made me feel I had to know the answer to everything — this sense of being on trial — I would probably be up on the roof. Diane allows me to admit failing without my feeling like it is being marked down somewhere. That's the thing I value most in this relationship. It helps you trust yourself."

John Puerner, who was a marketing executive for the *Chicago Tribune* before taking over as publisher of the *Sentinel*, says he relied heavily on John Haile, his editor, to guide him when he came to Orlando. "It's important to have an editor who understands where your knowledge gaps are," he says. Puerner wasn't clear, for example, on the independence of the editorial page from the rest of the newspaper. "We might endorse a candidate one day and the next day have a news story with some rather unflattering things about him," he says.

All these things — the communication, the shared values, the respect and trust — can come more easily if the publisher was once an editor. David Greenfield, publisher of *The Repository*, has been on both sides of the wall. He says he makes decisions every day based on his understanding of the nuances of the newsroom. For example, a local car dealer — and big advertiser — was upset

over a story about a lawsuit that had been filed against him. The story came from court records, the result of a beat reporter making the rounds. As it turned out, the suit was without merit, and the car dealer came to Greenfield threatening to pull his advertising, and with specific suggestions as to how the paper should apologize. "In hindsight, we probably shouldn't have played the story the way we did," says Greenfield. "But I made it clear to him he wasn't going to dictate our response. I understood how that mistake could be made. In fact, I think I made it once."

But some of the most effective editorpublisher partnerships have involved publishers with no news experience at all.

'GREAT EDITORS DO NOT MAKE GREAT NEWSPAPERS, GREAT PUBLISHERS DO'

David Hall, former editor, Cleveland Plain Dealer

When Jim Squires was editor of the Chicago Tribune, the publisher, Charles Brumback, had no newspaper background and the two men were drastically different in style. Except in a couple of key ways: both were brutally candid, and neither wanted to do the other's job. "My relationship with Brumback was one of the most successful ever," says Squires. "We got along, I think, because we were totally up front. He once said to me, 'I've been adding up columns all my life.' I said, 'That's fine, because I've been doing journalism all of mine." Together they won Pulitzers and made money, but they never became interchangeable. In his book, Read All About It, Squires recounts a conversation he had with Brumback before Squires left the Tribune, in which the publisher paid him perhaps the ultimate compliment: "You were never one of us." Squires explains: "I didn't look at corporate as my allies. I looked at them as someone I could hornswoggle. The corporate ethic was my enemy because I was trying to keep as many reporters on the streets as possible."

Even when editors and publishers trust each other, their interests sometimes clash in fundamental ways. That's when, as Gene Roberts said, the editor loses. But Cole Campbell, the recently departed editor of the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, doesn't publisher," says Harry Roser editor and now editor-at-Albany *Times Union*, "wil good editor, and thus toles that comes with publishing sive, honest newspaper."

like to characterize the relationship in terms of power. "It is a persuasive, deliberative relationship," says Campbell, who joined the faculty at The Poynter Institute in April. "How can the editor make his case? How can the publisher make his? In most situations, conflicts are worked out through deliberation and persuasion, and if you are coming from the same place on values and purpose, then the conflicts can almost always be resolved." When the St. Louis Rams went to the Super Bowl this year, coverage wasn't something the Post-Dispatch had in its budget. Campbell ended up sending thirty people to Atlanta to report the game. What did the publisher say? "He said don't send one person

more than you need to." But he let Campbell decide the number.

If you're not agreed on values and purpose, however, it's a different story. "The toughest thing to be these days is an innovator," says Campbell. "These large media companies are set up to perpetuate past success. That's just a fact of life today. When you see editors out of their jobs, it may not indicate a news side-business side clash, but rather a different appetite for risk-

taking on the part of the publisher or the owner. That was clearly the case with Stan Tiner in Oklahoma. I know Steve Smith is an innovator. So is Martha Steffens."

Power, though, is impossible to ignore. Ownership has always wielded the ultimate power, and if that power is increasingly insensitive to the peculiarities of newspapers and their role in society, then a healthy partnership between publishers and editors is more important than ever. "It takes both the editor and the publisher working together to convince corporate that something needs to be done," says Walker Lundy, editor of the *St. Paul Pioneer Press*.

Even at its best, it is an unequal partnership. "When people talk about this relationship you always hear them say the publisher has an obligation to leave the editor alone," says David Hall. "Well, that's bullshit. He runs the paper. He can fire the editor. Great editors do not make great papers, great publishers do. No editor, over time, can be better than his publisher." But, because it is a partnership, there is a bit more to it. "A good publisher," says Harry Rosenfeld, former editor and now editor-at-large of the Albany Times Union, "will tolerate a good editor, and thus tolerate the flak that comes with publishing an aggres-



While Washington burns with partisan rhetoric, we cool the air with clear-headed, innovative solutions to some of the nation's most unyielding problems. And we have fun doing it. **The Washington Monthly** explores the quirks, cons, and paralysis that too often underpin American politics—then we offer a sensible way out. *The New York Observer* says we are the magazine "to which anyone who gives a damn about this country must subscribe."

A0605

	NOW AND SAVE!
	bscription for a full year
	ashington Monthly for
only \$29.95.	
Name	
Address	
City	State Zip
Payment enclosed	☐ Bill me later
Charge my VIS	A MasterCard
Credit Card #	Exp
The Weel	hington Monthly
THE Wasi	
	ecticut Ave., N.W.
1611 Conn	ecticut Ave., N.W. gton, DC 20009

"... holds up a deadly accurate mirror to the Washington political culture, exposing its hypocrisies, stupidities, and unexpected triumphs." — Michael Beschloss



Myths About Trade

EXPERT WITNESS features top thinkers in various disciplines discussing the journalistic coverage of their world. Here the subject is global trade, and Robert E. Litan is interviewed by Bruce Stokes, who writes the Economic Interests column, on trade and international economics, for National Journal.

Why was the press caught off guard by the vehement anti-globalization demonstrations in Seattle last December at the meeting of the World Trade Organization (WTO)?

It wasn't just the press. The Clinton administration, the local authorities, and probably most of the delegations that came to the meeting were all caught off guard. The reason is not hard to understand. Historically, trade negotiations are the ultimate in "inside baseball" technical discussions about oftenobscure border restrictions against various goods and services. The subjects of many trade disputes over the years bananas, baseball bats, flowers, and so on - are often more the subjects of jokes than protests.

Several factors combined to make the Seattle meeting a very different affair. First, the WTO has come to represent for many nongovernmental organizations, labor unions, and citizens in different countries, not just the United States - a threat to local decision-making. The WTO looks to these groups and individuals like an economic and regulatory United Nations, and not a UN that seems to talk and talk, but a supranational body that actually seems to regulate affairs of individual countries.

Of course, this isn't true. All the WTO can do is decide trade disputes and allow the winning countries to impose limited trade sanctions against the losing countries, which still have the freedom to act as they have before and often do so. More broadly, the WTO is simply a negotiating forum for nations of the



ROBERT E.LITAN, both an attorney and an economist, is vice president and director of the economic studies program at the Brookings Institution, a Washingtonbased think tank. He spent much of the last decade in government service: from 1993 to 1995 he was deputy assistant attorney general in charge of civil antitrust litigation and regulatory issues in the Department of Justice; and in 1995 and 1996 he was associate director of the Office of Management and Budget.

Litan is known in Washington for his creative policy proposals in the face of complicated national issues. His insurance-for-displaced-workers scheme was embraced this year by Democratic presidential candidate Bill Bradley. The book he co-authored, Globaphobia, was widely praised as a cogent and literary exposition of the case for free trade.

Litan has a doctorate in economics from Yale University and a law degree from Yale. He received his undergraduate degree in economics from the Wharton School of Finance at the University of Pennsylvania.

impede economic growth, and thus the advancement of living standards in all countries, especially in less developed countries, that many of the protesters claim they want to promote.

But that is not what the protesters believe, and I am not confident that hours of patient explanation by economists and other policy makers of the virtues of cross-border trade and investment will change their minds. In part, I world to reduce barriers to trade that I think this is because of the second con-

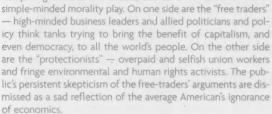
tributing factor to the Seattle protests and likely continuing protests at other such meetings: a floating anxiety about the pace of change in the world, which is fueled by technology, the Internet, and the like. For many people, the high-tech revolution has been a godsend, minting riches at a faster pace than ever seemed possible. But for others, those who lack the skills to thrive in the "new economy," the quickening pace of change is a threat and only reminds them of how they

ANOTHER VIEW: SEATTLE AND OTHER STORIES THAT THE MEDIA MISSED

BY IEFF FAUX

merican journalists seem continually surprised by the strength of opposition to current global trade and financial policies, whether the opposition appears in the streets of Seattle or the halls of Congress.

By and large, this is because the media treat such questions not as a contest of competing ideas and interests, but as a



What the media do not seem to get is that the fundamental disagreements are not about international trade, per se. They are about the rules of that trade. "Free trade" is a misnomer. NAFTA, the WTO, and other so-called "free trade" agreements contain hundreds of pages of detailed U.S.-style protections for the property rights of international corporate investors, enforceable by heavy trade sanctions. But they contain no effective protections against the exploitation of labor and the abuse of the environment. It is not "protectionism" but the imbalance in who gets protected that is the source of the anger in the streets.

The mainstream press routinely reflects multinational businesses' view that human rights and worker and environmental issues are "special interest" concerns, and that, in any case, they are overwhelmed by the benefits to all of expanded trade. Thus, statements from the administration that rising exports over the last decade have created growth and jobs are routinely reported as facts supporting the case for its trade policies. What the reader is routinely not told is that imports have risen much faster, generating a trade deficit that is now a record \$300 billion — which has to be paid for by borrowing from overseas. Business reporters who provide readers only with export numbers are like baseball writers who provide only one team's runs.

A reader does not have to be an expert to see that virtually none of the promises made by the political establishment to promote trade agreements in the 1990s have been fulfilled. NAFTA was supposed to stimulate an expanded trade surplus with Mexico, more U.S. jobs in autos and other high-wage industries, and rising wages in Mexico to provide a market for U.S. goods. ("Don't your friends at the autoworkers' union understand that NAFTA is going to be great for them?" one journalist asked me impatiently during the NAFTA debate.) NAFTA was also supposed to solidify a "reform" political faction in Mexico dedicated to clean government and democracy.

Instead: the trade surplus with Mexico turned into a trade deficit. Some 250,000 U.S. manufacturing jobs — many of them in the auto and auto parts industry — went south of the border. Wages for the typical Mexican worker have dropped 30 percent. And the reformers turned out to be even more corrupt than their predecessors.

Having once been burned, one would think that the media would be at least be a little wary next time around. Yet today the administration and its business allies use the same arguments to sell Congress on a trade agreement with China, with the press transmitting them to the public with virtually no reference to recent history.

Despite the undisputed fact that the Chinese reneged on agreements with the U.S. that were signed in 1992, the press accepts at face value the assertions of great benefits to come. For example, in an effort to garner congressional farm-state votes, the administration claims that China has agreed to import 7.3 million tons of wheat from the United States. But in an interview reported in the South China Morning Post in January, China's chief negotiator vice-minister Long Yongtu said that it was a "complete misunderstanding" to expect the wheat to actually enter China. The agreement only represented a "theoretical opportunity" for the export of more grain. No mention of this interview appeared in our three top newspapers.

Despite the growing importance of the global economy in the lives of Americans, we have a long way to go to where media coverage of global economics rises to the objective standards of the sports pages.

Jeff Faux is president of the Economic Policy Institute, in Washington, D.C., founded in 1986 "to broaden the discussion about economic policy to include the interests of low-and middle-income workers." He has written and lectured widely on global economic issues, and his most recent book is The Party's Not Over.

can't keep up. Those who are threatened know they can't stop technology, but they can slow down trade and investment liberalization — and Seattle proved them right.

■ Current press coverage of trade is centered on the congressional battle over granting permanent normal trade relations to China as part of letting China

into the WTO. Any observations on how this issue is being covered?

The press coverage of China, as well as most of the attention of political leaders, has been concentrated on China's saber rattling over Taiwan and what impact this may have on the prospects for House passage of legislation granting normal trade relations (NTR) to China (Senate passage)

being taken for granted). This is understandable given the political realities. At the same time, China's admission to the WTO would be a watershed event.

■ You wrote in your book Globaphobia [coauthored with Gary Burtless, Robert Z. Lawrence, and Robert J. Shapiro] that "the overwhelming weight of the evidence suggests that attempts to reverse the tide toward increasing globalization would harm the interests of the great majority of people in the United States and elsewhere around the world." This positive case for globalization often gets short shrift in the media. Why?

The classic problem with supporting free trade is that the benefits of open markets are distributed widely throughout the population, in imperceptible ways that consumers cannot touch and feel, while the costs — in the form of layoffs — are concentrated and highly visible. Under these circumstances, it is actually quite surprising how much support for free trade actually exists.

The reason for that support is that exporters in particular have a strong interest in maintaining open markets here because otherwise they become victims of foreign retaliation. This is all well and good. But if the only interests supporting free trade are exporters, then freer trade ends up being defended in a mercantilist fashion. This explains the prevailing ethos that "imports are bad, whence the ground of the strong read".

exports are good."

Any economist knows the fallacy in this view, of course. Forget international trade for a moment and just think about domestic transactions. When each of us goes to the grocery store, we "import" food, using the proceeds of our labor, which we "export" to our employers. Most of us, I suspect, would just as soon export less — that is, work less — and receive the same or even a larger amount of food from the store. The same holds true in the international arena. It's good to buy things, and better yet if we can get them cheaply. Open

trade helps make this possible.

President Clinton, finally, after the Seattle debacle, made a strong economic defense of imports. He pointed to the savings the average family receives from having access to foreign goods, which according to the USTR [U.S. Trade Representative's office], are roughly \$3,000 per year. I don't see many tax-cut packages with these kind of benefits. The media should follow up this story line by focusing on the costs of remaining protection — for example, existing textile and apparel quotas or tariffs — especially their impact on Americans with low incomes.

■ What stories about globalization are journalists not writing that they should, why should they write them, and, most important, what is the hook to make them interesting and relevant to the news of the day?

I would suggest two additional stories. One is how many small businesses rely on exports, not just directly, but indirectly as suppliers to the major exporters, such as Boeing and Caterpillar. This kind of story brings trade down more to Main Street and demonstrates that it's not just the Fortune 500 that cares about liberalized trade.

A second story that is important to pursue - in light of the growing conventional wisdom in this country that trade agreements must somehow be tied to agreements on labor and environmental standards - is to explore why less developed countries take such a different view. These countries don't understand how a rich country like the United States, with record low unemployment and a record high stock market, can reverse course. Not after over fifty years of being open to goods from all countries, especially developing countries, to whom we historically have given preferential access to our market.

■ The portion of the U.S. economy derived from trade has more than doubled since 1970. How would you assess the coverage of this dramatic development?

I don't believe this development has been covered much at all. Indeed, to the extent trade gets any coverage, it is usually in connection with the trade deficit, or tied to the alleged loss of jobs in some particular plant or company.

The monthly trade deficit number story used to have considerable impact, fueling ups and downs in political sentiment toward freer trade. The one fortunate development in recent years is that this story has lost its political punch. The trade deficit reflects fundamental macroeconomic factors at work, but the main reason Americans seem to be tuned out to trade numbers is that they are too busy enjoying the continuing economic good times.

In contrast, stories about job losses involving particular plants or downsizings at particular companies still seem to get some play. This happens especially when there are displaced workers who can credibly argue that their misfortune is due to a sudden rise in imports, as steelworkers did during the Asian crisis, or because the relevant company has moved its plant offshore. Rarely in these stories, however, does the press dig further or put the story in a larger context — showing that the lion's share of worker displacement is due to factors other than trade.

Speaking of firms threatening to pack their plants off to Mexico, some of the alleged worst abuses blamed on trade take place far from the press's prying eyes: in corporate boardrooms. Any thoughts about improving that coverage?

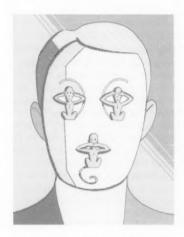
I'm aware that a number of firms have used the threat of moving production off-shore as a way to keep their workers' wages in line. But again, the press needs to dig deeper into assertions that these threats are what have done the trick. At the end of the day, if threats of moving were keeping wages down, one would expect to see labor's share of national income going down. But that simply hasn't happened.

■ The American public is ambivalent on trade issues, with a majority telling pollsters that they support free trade, but many also having deep reservations about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) or trade with China. Is our press coverage doing justice to this ambivalence?

You're right about the ambivalence, because as consumers, many Americans recognize that they're better off with free trade, as I argued earlier. But as workers, they're nervous they'll get displaced. Here, by using concrete examples, is where the press can do a better job of reporting to the anxious public. And it is still surprisingly anxious, despite a thirty-year low in the unemployment rate. In most instances, the major cause of worker disruption is not trade. After all, imports only account for about 15 percent of GDP. And that share probably overstates their contribution to job churning. The three dominant factors behind job losses are changes in consumer tastes - with people shifting from one brand to the other, within the same industry, or between goods and services of different industries; disruptions due to long-needed deregulation of some industries, transportation being a notable example; and changes in technology. What happened to all the workers in the encyclopedia industry when computers and CD-ROMs came along? They disappeared. There are many other stories like that involving e-mail, word processing, and so forth.

The public needs to understand that in a dynamic, competitive economy there is a constant Schumpeterian process of creative destruction that is unstoppable. Blaming trade is not the answer

The Truth About Self-Censorship



is that it is widespread, as common in newsrooms as deadline pressure, a virus that eats away at the journalistic mission.

We rarely talk about it — when was the last time you attended a seminar on self-censorship? And it is even rarer to try to do something about it. But unless we face what exists, key areas of news may never be reported.

That's why CJR commissioned the Pew Center for the People and the Press to survey two cross-sections of journalists. Among the findings: about a quarter of those interviewed had personally avoided doing stories because of potential conflicts.

Columnist Andrew Kohut reports on the findings on page 42.

"You cannot report what you don't pursue," Trudy Lieberman writes in her article on the experiences and methods of self-censorship, based on three dozen interviews and additional research. Page 44

Time Warner's agreement with editor-in-chief Norman Pearlstine, designed to insure editorial independence, is discussed on page 46.

Are there solutions to the problem? Tracy McNamara reports on page 49.

And Lowell Bergman, former CBS producer whose own experience triggered the movie, *The Insider*, gives a personal view of self-censorship in television news. Page 50

ILLUSTRATION BY DAVID SLITER

Self-Censorship: Counting the Ways

BY ANDREW KOHUT

elf-censorship has always been a problem for journalists, but a new survey reveals just how commonplace and insidious it is.

About a quarter of those polled have personally avoided pursuing newsworthy stories.

About three-in-ten believe that stories are ignored because they might conflict with the financial interests of their news organizations or advertisers. And majorities think that complexity or lack of audience appeal causes newsworthy stories not to be pursued.

These are among the findings in a major survey by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press and the Columbia Journalism Review. A total of 287 journalists were polled, including 81 senior editors and executives.

The survey highlights the nature and extent of self-censorship in journalism today:

- Journalists are more likely to confirm that self-censorship exists generally than to personally admit to avoiding newsworthy stories. Still, the 26 percent who acknowledge personal self-censorship goes to 41 percent when reshaping or softening is included. There is a generational divide on this question, with younger journalists more likely than older colleagues to say they have avoided or toned down stories.
- Market pressures manifested when newsworthy stories are ignored because they are too boring or complicated are seen as the most common factor for not pursuing good stories. Nearly eight in ten of those surveyed say stories that are seen as important but dull are often or sometimes ignored, while a majority says the same of highly complex stories.
- Local journalists face especially difficult challenges. Nearly one-third (32 percent) acknowledge they have softened the tone of a news story on behalf of the interests of their news organization; only 15 percent of those in the national media say they have done so. And 26 percent of local reporters say they have been told to avoid a story because it was dull or overly complicated, but suspect the real reason for the decision was that the story could harm their company's financial interests. Just 2 percent of national reporters harbor such suspicions.
- Investigative reporters a discreet group drawn entirely from the members of Investigative Reporters and Editors, Inc. (IRE) are more likely than either local or national journalists to cite the impact of business pressures on editorial deci-

sions. A strong majority (61 percent) of this group believes that corporate owners exert at least a fair amount of influence on decisions about which stories to cover; 51 percent of local journalists and just 30 percent of national journalists agree. Because this group does not comprise a representative cross-sample of journalists, its responses have not been included in the total results.

The reasons for avoiding stories can be many and varied. Often, time-starved reporters say they simply do not have the opportunity to follow up on important subjects. But market forces are seen as the primary reason why worthwhile stories

are not pursued, and this factor is especially prevalent in the broadcast arena.

Three-quarters of national broadcast journalists (and nearly six in ten of their local counterparts) say newsworthy stories are at least sometimes ignored because they are regarded as too complicated for the average person. Print journalists, both local and national, are far less likely to cite such conflicts as a factor.

In general, local journalists cite conflicts of interest — financial and otherwise — more often than their national colleagues. In particular, more local than national print reporters say stories that are damaging to the financial interests of news organizations are commonly or sometimes avoided. At the local level, print reporters and executives are about as likely as broadcast news professionals to cite this as a reason for ignoring stories.

But among national journalists, broadcasters cite this as more of a factor in self-censorship than print reporters.

Perhaps surprisingly, peer pressure — fear of embarrassment or potential career damage — is mentioned by about half of all journalists as a factor in avoiding newsworthy stories. But the survey finds little evidence that journalists steer clear of newsworthy stories because they might aggravate community prob-



THE TRUTH ABOUT SELF-CENSORSHIP

PRINT	S. BR	OADCAS	ST	
	Nat Print	rional Brdcst	Local Print Brdcst	
JOURNALISTS COMMONLY/ SOMETIMES AVOID A STORY BECAUSE IT MIGHT BE	%	%	%	%
Too complicated	47	75	40	57
Ridiculed by other journalists	40	29	43	14
Damaging to financial interests of news org.	23	35	38	39

lems. Only about one-in-five (19 percent) of all journalists say newsworthy stories are often or sometimes avoided for this reason.

Journalists say that, typically, they do not decide on their own to avoid newsworthy stories. More than half of those who think stories are sometimes ignored say that journalists either get signals from their bosses to avoid such stories or ignore them based on how they think their bosses would react. Of those who believe newsworthy stories are being avoided to protect corporate interests, fully three-quarters say journalists get signals or anticipate negative reactions from superiors, and just 8 percent say journalists decide to avoid such stories completely on their own.

ust as journalism is often more art than science, the process of determining when, why, and even whether good stories are being ignored is an imperfect one — as journalists themselves freely admit. A strong majority (58 percent) says that journalists at least sometimes wrongfully suspect stories are killed or buried because of conflicts of interest, when the stories in question simply lack merit.

On the other hand, the survey provides considerable evidence that at least for some journalists, there has been an unmistakable intrusion of commercial interests into newsroom decisions. For instance, about one in five of local (20 percent) and national (17 percent) reporters say they have faced criticism or pressure from their bosses after producing or writing a piece that was seen as damaging to their company's financial interests.

Overall, journalists have a more pessimistic attitude toward their profession than in the Pew Center's last major poll of journalists in early 1999. More local journalists report increased influence by corporate owners and advertisers in decisions on which stories to cover. And on the question of whether the media do a good job of informing the public, local and national journalists give themselves poorer marks than last year.

In 1999, about half of national (49 percent) and local (55 percent) journalists said the news business did a good or excellent job of balancing journalism's twin goals of telling the public what it wants to know and what it needs to know. Now, only 37 percent of national journalists and 35 percent of local journalists give the profession high marks, with majorities in both groups saying the media do only a fair job at this crucial task.



This article was written by Andrew Kohut, director of The Pew Research Center For The People & The Press and a columnist for CIR. The center selected representative journalists from national and local media with lists gathered from more than a decade of media polling. For the first time, respondents had the opportunity to answer on the Internet, and 243 out of 287 did. In addition, 90 members of IRE were also interviewed.

Follow-up mailings and telephone calls were used to encourage participation and when necessary to complete interviews.

MORE ON THE WEB: Full results and a complete description of the methodology are available on the Internet at the Web sites for the Pew Center (www.people-press.org) and CJR (www.cjr.org).

DIFFERENT REASONS FOR SELF-CENSORSHIP

MARKET	PRESSURI	ES	
	ALL	NAT'L	LOCAL
TOO COMPLEX FOR READERS	%	%	%
Commonplace	12	15	10
Sometimes	40	47	33
Rarely	33	28	37
Never/Don't know	15	10	20
	100	100	100
IMPORTANT BUT DULL			
Commonplace	27	30	25
Sometimes	50	54	46
Rarely	16	13	20
Never/Don't know	7	3	9
	100	100	100

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST NAT'L LOCAL NEWS ORGANIZATION OR PARENT CO. 0/0 Commonplace 6 3 8 Sometimes 29 28 Rarely 40 44 37 Never/Don't know 25 25 24 100 100 **ADVERTISERS** 0 Commonplace 20 Sometimes 26 Rarely 44 47 41 Never/Don't know 27 30 24 100 FRIENDS OF THE BOSS Commonplace 2 2 2 16 16 14 Sometimes 46 48 48 34 36 Never/Don't know 36

PERSONA	I D	EASO	MS	
FERSONA				
		ALL	NAT'L	LOCAL
RELATIONSHIP WITH SOURCE		96	%	96
Commonplace		6	4	8
Sometimes		36	36	35
Rarely		45	46	45
Never/Don't know		13	14	12
		100	100	100
STANDING WITH OTHER JOURNA	LISTS			
Commonplace		7	6	8
Sometimes		31	32	31
Rarely		. 39	39	37
Never/Don't know		23	23	24
	1	100	100	100
CAREER				
Commonplace		5	6	4
Sometimes		33	35	31
Rarely		36	35	38
Never/Don't know		26	24	27
TOTAL DOLLARION		100	100	100

100

You Can't Report What You Don't Pursue



THE TRUTH ABOUT SELF-CENSORSHIP

BY TRUDY LIEBERMAN

A young reporter writes an exposé, but the editor says, "I don't think we're going to run that."

The second time the reporter goes to her editor, the editor says, "I don't think that's a good idea." She doesn't research and write the story.

The third time the reporter has an idea. But she doesn't go to her editor.

The fourth time she doesn't get the idea.

— Nicholas Johnson, former FCC commissioner, on the process of self-censorship

ark Schwanhausser censors himself. "Journalism is in some ways the path of least resistance," he explains. "If you're beaten down once, you go to another story where you can have an equally important impact for your readers. Are we better off or worse off? That's the debatable issue."

It is indeed. Schwanhausser works for the San Jose Mercury News, and back in 1994 he wrote a straightforward story about how to buy a car. It told readers the ins and outs of negotiation, how such realities as dealer incentives and money holdbacks work, how to use an invoice to figure the actual cost of the car, and gave other shopping tips. Members of the Santa Clara County Motor Car Dealers' Association didn't like it one bit. They vanked some \$1 million worth of ads. Publisher Jav Harris tried to coax them back with a mea culpa letter that was critical of the article, and a house ad asserting the paper's pride in its "longstanding partnership with the Northern California new car dealers." This made an impression on Schwan-

hausser, who, at the time, told CJR that "the chilling effect can be very subtle. When you start guessing what people will react to, you can find all kinds of reasons not to write a story."

In recent years the newspaper has run smaller, less controversial stories about car shopping, but "there was no big piece like mine that dealt with auto dealership issues," says Schwanhausser. If he were to suggest such a story today, he says, there would be "more conversations and alerts going all the way up to the executive editor. We'd have to say why are we doing it. That would be a harder hurdle for me right now." Harris had no comment.

Schwanhausser has moved away from consumer stories and has gone on to cover personal finance — stories that tell people how to take control of their money, and that often deal with safer subjects than car dealers. "I haven't been real eager to come back and do more stories like that," he says. "There are other things that are just as good and a whole lot less hassle."

A PERVASIVE PROBLEM

Self-censorship is as old as journalism itself, and Schwanhausser's is just one variant. Almost all of us have held back at one time or another, choosing not to pursue a legitimate story or not to include a difficult fact, or to severely soften a story's angle. The reasons range from simple laziness and resistance to complexity to fears of conflicts of interest, our own or our media company's, to fears that pushing too hard will hurt our careers. We do it for many reasons, some of them far more subtle than Schwanhausser's.

Self-censorship is, of course, hard to quantify. One reporter's reluctance to tackle something complex is another's hard-eyed calculation that the payoff is not worth the struggle. One editor's crusade is another's tilting at windmills. And self-censorship is much easier to see in our colleagues and competitors than in ourselves. That fact is one of the striking findings of the poll on self-censorship that CIR asked The Pew Research Center For The People & The Press to take.

The poll showed that self-censorship is pervasive. One quarter of the editors and reporters who took part indicated that they have, on occasion, personally avoided certain kinds of legitimate stories. And the numbers rise when the journalists are asked about other journalists' practices. Investigative journalists — drawn from the membership list of Investigative Reporters & Editors and separately polled — were the most likely to cite the impact of corporate pressure as a cause of self-censorship. But many other journalists also cited that factor as well.

In addition to the poll, CJR interviewed more than three dozen journalists. The conversations and the poll indicate that journalists consider self-censorship a serious but touchy issue. Some did not want to talk, although others discussed at length the process of self-censorship — why it happens and how it works. Their experiences tend to mirror Pew's findings.

In the wake of growing media concentration, journalistic angst has tended to focus on overt censorship — media company managers directly telling editors and writers just what they can and cannot report, especially concerning the company's own far-flung interests. But self-censorship is more pervasive and arguably more insidious. Pressure from local power brokers may be less pernicious than the self-censorship of editors, producers, or reporters who simply choose a service story or an easier topic and shortchange their public.

You can't report what you don't pursue.

SIGNS AND SIGNALS

Sometimes the line between overt censorship and self-censorship blurs. Walt Disney Company officials insist they had nothing to do with the killing of an ABC News story by a pair of the company's most respected investigative journalists in late 1998 about questionable hiring practices at Disney World. A failure to run criminal background checks had allegedly allowed convicted pedophiles to work at the resort. A few days before the story's demise, Michael Eisner, Disney's chairman, had articulated his policy on Disney media covering Disney interests: "I would prefer ABC not to cover Disney," he said on National Public Radio's Fresh Air program. "I think it's inappropriate . . . ABC News knows that I would prefer them not to cover [Disney]." And they

At AOL/Time Warner, meanwhile, Norman Pearlstine, Time Inc.'s editor in chief, tells his journalists he wants AOL/Time Warner's ever-increasing commercial enterprises covered like those of any other company (see page 46). Editors are supposed to alert him to every story about the company, he says, so he can check for fairness and accuracy, although he has some concerns about the signals that this policy sends to his journalists. Steve Lovelady, an editor-at-large of Time Inc., says he takes Pearlstine's order as a positive journalistic signal. "He may be looking for inaccuracies," Lovelady says, and to avoid "the appearance of going easy on ourselves. The message is don't back off, do tread on toes when it is called for."

Self-censorship often reflects the subtle and not-so-subtle signals that define the boundaries of news. "After awhile you get to the point where you know the things that are really sticky issues. When things are sticky, there are lots and lots of questions — basic checking, but much more," says a long-time reporter at a Florida newspaper

'NOBODY SAYS DIRECTLY: THIS IS AN ISSUE WE DON'T WANT TO COVER, BUT YOU CAN READ BETWEEN THE LINES'

who did not want her name used. "Nobody says directly 'this is an issue we don't want to cover,' but you can read between the lines. There are just things you know that are never put into words." The reporter came to understand, for example, that for some reason her paper was leery of items critical of mobile home dealers and used car dealers. So she learned to handle these topics very gingerly.

Sometimes, of course, a reporter may confuse an editor's lack of enthusiasm for a poorly written or a poorly reported story with a signal to lay off a particular topic. Journalists are not immune to paranoia. Sometimes we see conspiracies where none exist.

Gil Thelen, executive editor of the Tampa Tribune, says that when he was editor of The Sun News, in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, he was friendly with civic leaders, and this was well-known in the newsroom. When a tip came in that one of those leaders was involved in a suspect land deal, reporters were reluctant to follow it up because of the man's association with the editor. "The newsroom was young and impressionable," Thelen says. When an editor brought the problem to his attention, the matter was clarified and reporters pursued the tip.

There are, of course, legitimate reasons · for avoiding certain topics. Sometimes they really are worthy but dull; sometimes the news outlet has actually done enough on the issue. And sometimes the reporter or editor pitching an idea doesn't really have the tools it would take to sift through the nuances of a complex issue, and the editor knows it. Sometimes a reporter is simply tired of a subject. Pew found that some 58 percent of journalists say that their colleagues and competitors, at least sometimes, wrongfully suspect stories are rejected or buried because of financial conflicts of interest, when in fact the story ideas are not good ones.

Sometimes the worst signal is no signal. Tom Leithauser, who worked at

four Florida newspapers and is now associate editor of a trade publication, Telecommunications Reports, puts it this way: "Sometimes you don't know why an editor may be balking at a story especially in a newsroom with lots of layers between you and the top editor."

David Cay Johnston, now at *The New York Times*, says he found the lack of a clear "yes" or "no" on story ideas particularly frustrating during his days at the *Los Angeles Times*. "If the top editor's fundamental response is noncommittal" when stories are suggested, he says, "you breed self-doubt into the organization." Self-doubt, of course, can lead to self-censorship.

THE MASTER NARRATIVE

So can another process that often takes place in newsrooms: an unconscious narrowing of the idea of what is news. "I don't think there is a news organization in the country that doesn't have a set of priorities peculiar to that organization," says Ben Bagdikian, former dean of the Graduate School of Journalism at the University of California, Berkeley. "They are usually unstated but are evident by what stories are greeted with enthusiasm and are given big play, and what stories are put down or cut down with signals - 'we did that one, maybe another time.'

News priorities become internalized. "I know what the editors want, and I want the same thing," says Jim Ritter, a twenty-one-year veteran at the *Chicago Sun-Times*. But what is considered news can be quietly squeezed by journalistic conventional wisdom and by unspoken ideology — the police always push blacks around;

AT TIME INC., EDITORIAL INDEPENDENCE IS IN WRITING

Excerpted from "The Role of Time Inc.'s Editor-in-Chief," written by Time Inc. editor-in-chief Norman Pearlstine and signed by c.e.o. Gerald Levin

"Time Warner's board, its chief executive, and the chief executive of Time Inc. recognize that the financial success of Time Inc.'s magazines is inextricably linked to their credibility. The board and the chief executives hold the Editor-in-Chief of Time Inc. accountable for the editorial quality and integrity of the company's magazines. To this end, they are committed to upholding the Editor-in-Chief's unique level of editorial independence.

The publications under the Editor-in-Chief's control are expected to provide readers with synthesis, analysis, review, and commentary. They are also expected to provide unbiased coverage of the myriad interests of advertisers and of Time Warner itself. Editorial independence is essential so that the Editorin-Chief can produce publications that advance the public interest while delivering a superior return on investment.

The Editor-in-Chief shall report to the chief executive of Time Inc. on all business and financial matters. Although the chief executive is responsible for all financial decisions affecting the Group's operation, they shall be taken in consultation with the Editor-in-Chief when those decisions affect editorial performance"



HOW PEARLSTINE MAKES IT WORK IN PRACTICE

'I ask to be flagged on every story about Time Warner.'

I have a specific mandate [above] which has been signed off on by the board, by the chief executive of Time Warner, and the chief executive of Time Inc. — that our magazines cover Time Warner, its products, and its people, and that we cover them aggressively.

There are two things I have to acknowledge. One is, I try to read everything where Time Warner or its competitors are mentioned. There are a few reasons for that. You can't assume that just because you have that piece of paper, the mandate, that coverage is going to be straight, that coverage is going to be fair, so I do try to read everything. Some stuff gets past me. It's amazing how much stuff we end up writing on ourselves.

Secondly, there is a kind of catch-22 that you get involved in: there is presumption by the readers of Time magazine that when Time magazine writes about Time Warner, they actually know what they're talking about. Yet, in many cases the corporation chooses to treat us no differently than the way it treats the rest of the media, and they want us to treat them like everyone else. There was one week when Jerry [c.e.o. Gerald Levin gave an interview to Newsweek and didn't give it to Time. I was scrambling pretty hard, and actually did some reporting on the story myself because I found it intolerable that Newsweek would beat Time on a story.

I think there is also the risk that given how sacred editorial independence is to all of us, there will be times when our people may want to bend over backwards to show their independence in a way that may indeed be unfair to the corporate entity. We took some flack from some of the media critics for putting both Levin and Case on the cover of Time after the announcement of the AOL-Time Warner merger. I thought it was totally appropriate to put them both on the cover and it would have been bizarre not to. But the fact that we did and the other two newsmagazines didn't certainly gave people who were looking for examples of corporate interference something to talk about. As is always the case with these things, Jerry doesn't know what's in the magazine until it's on the press. To me it was a straight news decision.

We have a lot of different constituents. The readers don't, I think, get all upset about this. They either trust *Time* and *Fortune*, or they don't. I think advertisers have come to understand there is no quid pro quo. I think the board and the division heads of Time Warner have come to understand — certainly the Warner Brothers people who read reviews in Entertainment Weekly do — that there is no difference in the way they get covered from every other studio. I like to urge

people to keep focusing on the readers and forget about everyone else.

I'm not an officer or director of the company, so it seems to me my mission and mandate is not inconsistent. So if we have an article critical about some aspect — then so be it.

The question I can't answer is how people at Time Inc. feel about the editorial independence of their magazines and the ability to cover ourselves. It seems to me that we have established that beyond doubt and we show it every week.

I do ask to be flagged on every story about Time Warner or its competitors. I don't read every story in every magazine, so I am making some distinction by doing that, which can have unforeseen consequences on people as they think about it. I hope that reporters don't feel pressure. It's not inconceivable that they might. But, I don't think I'd change my policy on that.

If readers either think there are stories that we're keeping from them or that there are stories that we're pulling our punches on, we're out of business. If you're going to have a magazine, it's clear to me that you have to have the highest level of editorial independence.

Time Inc. editor-in-chief Norman Pearlstine was interviewed on self-censorship by Tracy McNamara, CIR assistant editor.



THE TRUTH ABOUT SELF-CENSORSHIP

politicians are not to be trusted; the process of government is boring; labor is dull; the pro-life crowd doesn't respect women; athletes are greedy. Much self-censorship springs from what former St. Louis Post-Dispatch editor William Woo calls the "master narrative," which he defines as the template that reporters bring to an event or issue. "The master narrative," Woo says, "is a reason why some stories that should get in, don't get in." Editors and reporters absorb the conventional wisdom and often don't stray from its acceptable borders.

Examples of acceptable villains and victims abound in just about every corner of reportage. HMOs, for example, are new to the villains list. China has been on it since the early days of the cold war. In the summer of 1997, when Woo and his wife, journalist Martha Shirk, as part of a Knight fellowship, examined how U.S. media covered the transfer of Hong Kong to China, they found that news outlets, following the master narrative, continued to predict that the government would stifle free expression there. The same three anecdotes kept appearing and reappearing to "prove" the point — despite the fact that the anecdotes didn't hold up.

"There's a reluctance to cover stories that stray from the mainstream," says Dan Rutz, who recently left his post as senior medical correspondent for CNN. In his field, he says that means "safe and desirable" stories come from major medical journals. Pieces about alternative therapies for HIV/AIDS, for example, are far more difficult to do, because they veer from the dogma of the mainstream scientific community. When it comes to writ-

ing such stories, says Rutz, "reporters chicken out."

Jonathan Weisman, White House correspondent for the Baltimore Sun, wrote a piece last July asking a question that wandered outside conventional wisdom: Is it really a good thing to pay off the national debt? "I wrote it and it got buried on a business page." Would he address the topic again? "Probably not," he says. He would wait, he said, until "others make it an issue. You're always trying to gauge what editors are interested in. We want to write for the front, not the inside pages."

CODE WORDS

In today's media culture, stories on any topic that journalists perceive as dull or complicated tend not to fit the master narrative. Pew found that by far the biggest reason journalists censor themselves, at least sometimes, is that a story is considered too dull or complicated for the average reader. Seventy-seven percent of the journalists said their peers avoid stories that are "important but dull," while 52 percent said their peers shy away from topics they consider too complex for readers.

er too complex for readers.

This is nothing new, of course, and if readers are not interested in certain dull or complicated stories, that may well be an acceptable reason for not publishing them. Yet "dull" and "complicated" can be code words. Twenty-six percent of the local journalists Pew surveyed indicated that, although editors had told them to avoid certain stories that were dull or overly complicated, those journalists suspected the

tance was potential harm to their organization's financial interests. (In contrast, only 2 percent of national reporters believed that.)

real reason for resis-

ed is somewhat arbitrary and changes with the zeitgeist. Current newsroom wisdom dictates that among the dull and more complicated beats these days is government. Joan Lowy, a reporter for Scripps-Howard News Service in Washington, says her editors have less enthusiasm for stories about politics and government than they once did, and instead want pieces that "real people can relate to." Howard Kurtz of The Washington Post, writing in Brill's Content, casually asserts that the FDA is a "boring government bureaucracy" to cover. Yet the under-covered FDA is a cauldron of ferocious ideological and scientific struggles whose outcomes can affect us all. Walter Pincus, a national security correspondent for The Washington Post, says that "detailed" stories sometimes sit around for a while these days. There is a recent tendency, he says, to run stories only when an issue is hot.

What passes for dull and complicat-

"Dull" and "complicated" mean something different in TV news, where visuals matter so much. Ex-CNN reporter Rutz says that basic science stories are "judged too complicated or boring for TV." Editors don't think much of stories about health care reform "unless you have lots of whiny patients and doctors to present."

"Complicated" generally translates to "time-consuming," and it's hardly sur-

prising that reporters avoid major-effort stories, given today's cost pressures in the newsroom.

Yet time, cost, and space can define the permissible boundaries of reporting. As one magazine reporter put it, if the space is really limited, why do deep reporting? Likewise, when a news organization puts a price tag on a big story, "the story has been contained," says investigative.

tained," says investigative reporter Fredric Tulsky. "The story never goes to the most

EDITORS DON'T THINK MUCH OF STORIES ABOUT HEALTH CARE REFORM UNLESS YOU HAVE LOTS OF WHINY PATIENTS AND DOCTORS TO PRESENT



THE TRUTH ABOUT SELF-CENSORSHIP

dangerous of places because limits are imposed for nonjournalistic reasons. Reporting is a dynamic process. You don't know where the story is going to go. But if you can't make this many phone calls or file that FOI request because it will take too long, you don't know what you're missing." Neither does the public. That, Tulsky says, is the real problem stemming from profit pressures in the newsroom.

CAREER MOVES

Some reporters are careerists, and if climbing the ladder means avoiding stories that don't fit the master narrative, they back away. Pew found that 53 percent of journalists surveyed said that their peers sometimes avoided stories that might hurt their careers or subject them to scorn. But only 4 percent admitted that they themselves had dodged certain subjects for that reason. Says Nicholas Johnson, the former FCC commissioner: "It's difficult to advance while simultaneously arguing with one's superiors about what should be investigated and reported." No one wants to get nailed as the reporter who did "the" story that caused a ruckus at the upper levels of a news organization; few editors get fired for stories they don't publish.

One reporter who covered sensitive abortion issues for a midwestern newspaper, and who asked for anonymity, knows what Johnson means. "I pushed and pushed but after awhile I just got the feeling I better back off because some of the editors acted like I was obsessed with the issue. They would say 'Maybe you should cover

other things or more mundane things." When they started questioning her phone bills, she did back off and eventually left the paper.

Reporters have lots of ideas, and we often move the ones we know will get editorial support to the top of the list. The troublesome topic goes to a back burner, where it may simmer forever.

Sometimes journalists censor themselves to protect their sources, although the Pew study found that only 18 percent of the journalists admitted to that (while 17 percent of investigative reporters did). In covering politics or foreign governments, access is the coin of the realm, and to protect that access, reporters may soften stories for the benefit of a source. Public officials can give access, and they can take it away. "If you ask the right question, and I don't want to answer it, I don't call you back," says Vermont governor Howard Dean. Too many rebuffs spell career trouble.

Access is super-important in sports writing, notes James Warren, Washington bureau chief for the *Chicago Tribune*. "If you cover the White Sox and the manager and general manager think you're an asshole," he says, "there aren't many places to go."

"Every single sportswriter knows the story you shouldn't write," says Bruce Selcraig, a free-lance writer who often covers sports and is a contributing editor to CJR. Selcraig says he once wrote a story for Golf Digest about autograph-hunters on the golf circuit and an editor penciled out a particular passage that noted that Tiger Woods, the number one golfer in the world, had been uncooperative and failed to show up for a scheduled interview. Selcraig thought the magazine was afraid of offending Woods, who has a contract with Golf Digest as a "playing

editor" to give golf tips to readers. Now, he says, "I know I'm not going to get anywhere proposing a story that takes the luster off Tiger Woods." (Peter McCleery, the editor who handled the piece, says he thought the anecdote was "maybe a cheap shot.")

The Pew/CJR poll noted that when it comes to avoiding conflicts with a publication's advertisers or friends of management, local journalists feel greater pressure than their peers who write for national publications. Alan Gersten, now a free-lancer, says that while he was the business editor of the Omaha World Herald in the 1980s, his reporters tended to soft-pedal poor earnings reports from local companies by putting the bad news at the bottom. "Any positive aspect was put at the top," Gersten says, "because they felt management would rewrite it" anyway if they didn't. Gersten says he tried to break that habit.

Sometimes pressure leading to self-censorship comes not from the business side, but from the public. In Denver, Tim Ryan, managing editor of KUSA-TV, an NBC affiliate, says that the station is quite mindful of how its viewers feel about continued coverage of the Columbine High School shootings. The public made it clear that they've had enough. "You can't ignore the psychological health of the community," he says. "It affected them

very deeply." When reporters and camera crews go out to report a Columbine-related story, "we are one of the bad guys. I've had to wrestle with the urge to not do Columbine stories, because we know we will get these calls and these emails, and our crews might get yelled at out in the fie d." That even happens when the sta-

tion views the story as positive,

such as when it covered a story

'I PUSHED AND PUSHED BUT AFTER AWHILE I JUST GOT THE FEELING I BETTER BACK OFF BECAUSE SOME OF THE EDITORS ACTED LIKE I WAS OBSESSED WITH THE ISSUE.'

FIGHTING BACK

How to Prevent Self-censorship

BY TRACY MCNAMARA

ow do you stifle self-censorship? Build a healthy 'newsroom culture,' journalists say. As Bloomberg writer Henry Goldman points out, the culture of a journalistic enterprise affects what it reports, sees — and misses. Reporters and editors might help create a robust, inquiring culture, where diverse ideas and risk-taking are encouraged, by considering the following suggestions:

REPORTERS:

- If you have a story that you feel strongly about, you have an obligation not only to think about the story but also to write it, says Gene Roberts, former editor of *The Philadelphia Inquirer* and managing editor of *The New York Times*. Editors can't always visualize your story until it is written. Roberts once worked on a civil rights story for a year in his spare time, and upon completion, it immediately went into the paper. "If I had proposed it before writing it," he says, "they would have said it was too complex, that there wasn't enough time to report it."
- Push your story idea by getting as much data to support your proposal as possible, suggests Arthur Hayes, a journalism professor at Quinnipiac College in Connecticut.

- Give your editors and publishers more credit. Assumptions about the rules of the road, what is acceptable to cover at your news organization, are often based on folk wisdom, says Tampa Tribune editor Gil Thelen. Editors may be interested in bolder stories than reporters realize.
- Don't underestimate your audience. Readers are able to engage in controversy more than they are given credit for, says Sig Gissler, former editor of *The Milwaukee Journal*.
- But if you can't carry your story out, consider going outside your organization: free-lance the article elsewhere or, as *The Village Voice*'s Nat Hentoff advises, if the story is significant, consider leaking it to other outlets, including the new options online.

FOITORS

- Through action on your part talking candidly about the direction of your newsroom, for example, or suggesting valid stories that might ruffle the corporate ownership show that not only is it okay for reporters to go against the grain, but that it is expected. Encourage risk-taking ideas from reporters at brainstorming sessions or news meetings, and reward those who make them.
- Build a newsroom that values honesty
 and show by example. Build clarity,

explicitness, and directness into the culture.

- Be aware of what former St. Louis Post-Dispatch editor Cole Campbell refers to as, "the Megaphone Effect" if a boss offers an idea, the message becomes accentuated. "With this in mind, I'll say, 'I'm only making a suggestion, not an assignment."
- If you perceive a conflict, assign someone else to the story. Bill Dwyre, sports editor of the Los Angeles Times, says that if a controversial issue arises with a sports team, the paper will often assign someone other than the regular beat reporter who covers that team. "The reporter has to live with these people," he says. "If the reporter breaks a fairly major story on the beat, he could spend the rest of the season totally incognito to the team, access-wise, and that doesn't help the paper."

Newsrooms that do not encourage creativity and freedom of expression are failing newsrooms, both reporters and editors say. "Be careful who you work for — and be prepared to leave," suggests NPR media reporter Brooke Gladstone. Good advice, says Roberts. "If anything is preventing stories from bubbling up and getting into the paper, then something is malfunctioning."

Tracy McNamara is an assistant editor at CIR.

about this year's homecoming king, who had been wounded in the massacre. Ryan says his station struggles to find a balance between holding back and "the fact that there is still news value."

WHAT IS LOST?

Battling self-censorship may boil down to a question of whether we are honest with ourselves and to what we are willing to risk at any given time and over any given story.

Some journalists are better at spinning rationalizations than at taking

risks. Says one reporter, "It's not the end of the world" if some story doesn't get in. "There are other stories that are equally valid." Another says, "Why should a reporter agonize over whether a story is acceptable to management? Send it over and let them decide. It frees you to move on from that story to another." Still others have so thoroughly assimilated the values of their news organization that they may not even recognize when self-censor-ship occurs.

Self-censorship has not shriveled journalism. Take a look at the list of prize-winning stories on page 60 and 61, some of which surely were risky to pursue, and think of the hundreds of other gutsy pieces that did not make the spotlight. Many good stories that might well be self-censored are not.

Many others are, however. When that happens, the public gets cheated and democracy is stifled. Our readers and viewers expect us to be their eyes, and sometimes that means we must look inside ourselves.

Trudy Lieberman is a contributing editor to CJR. She is director of the Center for Consumer Health Choices at Consumers Union. Her latest book is Slanting the Story: the Forces that Shape the News, published in May.

THE TRUTH ABOUT SELF-CENSORSHIP

A Personal View

Network Television News: With Fear and Favor

BY LOWELL BERGMAN

spent twenty-one years in network

television mostly as a producer for television newsmagazines, first at ABC and for sixteen years at CBS. Now I am out. A gradual process, hastened by the movie, *The Insider*, has led me to begin thinking about what the realities are behind the camera and the stories you see on network television

stories you see on network television news. The movie does something that you cannot do on network television news: it raises the issue of corporate censorship and, more importantly, self-censorship, and it explores both its implications and the choices it forces on those involved. Its subject, of course, is CBS's decision in 1995 to not air a 60 Minutes report on Jeffrey Wigand, the former vice president of Brown & Williamson who charged that the company had hid the truth about tobacco's addictive and harmful properties from the American

Executives of the network news divisions say that they will report any story of public interest and import without fear or favor, without considering its potential commercial consequences. They say that, but do not believe it.

The menu of what stories will be initiated, what enterprise reporting will and will not be done is formed by the networks' commercial interest. The idea of committing resources to do stories that in and of themselves are clearly in the public interest is dead. The exceptions prove the rule.

Now, it has always been difficult no matter where you worked in the media to propose a story that might affect a major advertiser, the publisher-owner, or his business partners.

The problem today especially in television news is that any obligation to report stories about unaccountable



was executive producer of the 60 Minutes report

LOWELL

60 Minutes report on smoking that CBS held up in 1995 — and that incident became

the subject of the movie, *The Insider*. This article is adapted from a talk he gave at New York University earlier this year.

power, about individuals or institutions that are as powerful as you are, as your broadcast company is, has been lost. It was an ideal that television news strived for in the wake of Watergate and the Vietnam war. But it is an ideal that has died in the wake of deregulation and the unfettered growth of corporate power.

This censorship is rarely a result of external pressure. More often it is self-censorship that appears inside the company and is presented as common sense. That is what happened in the tobacco story. Brown & Williamson lawyers did not threaten to sue. They did not have to. That is what has changed.

I would venture that no assignment editor at the evening news broadcasts or executive producer at a so-called news: magazine program would hesitate to pursue, or spend money pursuing, enterprise stories about the Monica Lewinsky scandal, O.J. Simpson, the Princess Di car crash, or the death of JFK Jr. Unfortunately, that commitment is not matched when it comes to stories about who wields unaccountable power over our lives; or who is behind the corporate mergers that now dominate the media.

That was what happened in the Brown & Williamson case in 1995. CBS's general counsel, Ellen Kaden, opposed airing the Brown & Williamson story. At a meeting

I attended to discuss the situation, neither Don Hewitt or Mike Wallace exhibited any of their well-known ability to argue, caiole, and intimidate.

At a later meeting, Kaden reported outside counsel had supported her position. I knew the story was dead but argued with Hewitt and Wallace that we should not take orders from lawyers. What do CBS executives have to say?

They dismissed me for splitting hairs. As Hewitt put it: "You can't do the story!" But, I persisted. So on the morning of October 3, 1995, just to be absolutely clear that I knew what I was dealing with, I called Eric Ober, who was then the president of CBS News.

I said, "You sat in the meeting yesterday, Eric." (He had been very quiet, saying little.) "These are lawyers giving advice, what is the position of CBS News on this matter?" And without missing a beat, he replied, "The corporation will not risk its assets on the story." Period.

[CBS eventually ran the story after canceling the original airing.]

Let me make it clear that I came out of print in the 1970s, and it was no surprise to me, based on stories I had done back then with various publishers ranging from *Rolling Stone* to *Penthouse* to the Hearst Corporation, that corporate interest obviously has an editorial influence over what publications will do and not do. It's a given.

So you know what the limits are. But a way of gauging a publication or broadcast is to find out how close they will let you get to that limit.

For example, I discovered at ABC News that you could not do an enterprise story about a supplier or a major advertiser. You could try to do it but you were taking a lot of risks getting close to the limit. In one case we did manage to get a story on about the president of ABC, Inc. and his financial relationship to a suppli-

public.

er — Aaron Spelling. It slipped in during the summertime and led to all kinds of fallout, including a speculative financial magazine piece alleging that somehow the president of ABC News, Roone Arledge, might be using the story to get his boss's job. Arledge did not even know about the story when it ran.

This was such an exception that it prompted unwarranted speculation that there must be some corporate conspiracy going, jockeying for power. The exception proves the rule.

onflict of interest was true then and is true today. The best example: If you are the owner of an NFL team you have a virtual free pass, in terms of network television news. The network will not initiate a critical story about your business practices and history. No in-depth story will be commissioned. I was told that, at ABC News in 1981 in a meeting with an executive producer. At CBS News in 1997 the prohibition was repeated by a senior executive and a major on-camera personality.

I knew at the time that one of the NFL owners, Eddie DeBartolo, Jr. was under grand jury investigation in New Orleans for bribery related to his gambling license. The whole issue of professional sports and the vast cash business around gambling has always fascinated me. Given the fact CBS did not have football, I figured there was a chance that we could do the story. I was wrong

the story. I was wrong.

That fall I taught a seminar at the University of California's Graduate School of Journalism at Berkeley. Anticipating that the story would break in time, I got four of the students to work on it. I knew that whether or not CBS wanted to do it, now there would at least be follow-up coverage. Once a story becomes public—someone else does it in print, for example—then you can put pictures in it for a television version. Sure enough it all broke with an indictment in December 1997.

Remember, CBS did not have football. I had been told by the executive and onair talent six months earlier that the one thing CBS's new c.e.o., Mel Karmazin, really wanted, was to get football back. So there was no way we could do any enterprise reporting about the NFL's owners even if they might be caught up in criminal activity.

But now the event had happened. DeBartolo had been indicted. CBS still did not have football. Due to my post-tobacco re-negotiation I was no longer a staffer at 60 Minutes, but I worked for all of CBS News. But I soon learned that due to the

headlines there was 60 Minutes interest in an in-depth piece. I thought, "Great." I've got these files. I've got the students who had already explored Eddie DeBartolo, Jr.'s, other legal problems. And his family history. I was in contact with the 49er organization and its then chief operating officer Carmen Policy.

Everything was set up. I got together with a 60 Minutes producer, associate producer, and correspondent and it was agreed that we would do the story. I would co-produce and be the field person since I live in the San Francisco Bay area. Four weeks later, CBS signed up NFL football. Two weeks after that, I received a phone call saving that 60 Minutes was no longer interested in doing the piece because "the 49ers didn't get in the Super Bowl." Bemused, I said well fine, but I've got Carmen Policy and all these people in the 49er organization interested and ready to let us shoot spring practice and the post season. Why not do it, as we often did at 60 Minutes, for the fall.

No, came the response. Not interested. End of story.

All of this is anecdotal information. A number of my colleagues have said to me that "Gee, this has never happened to me. No one has ever told me I could not do a story because of its content!" And in most cases I would agree. It is rare to have a story killed, an interview pulled. Usually the circumstances are much more subtle, the reasons are usually something like: "Who will go on camera?" "It's boring"; or "No one cares and no one will watch."

As a result, the reality of the world of news and information has regressed, especially in broadcasting. "News" no longer means what it once did. The very forms used by the broadcast news organizations emphasizing the "star" correspondent over the substance of the story has undermined their credibility. It is no surprise then that the commitment of media organizations to reporting without fear or favor has waned. And so today, it is more difficult than ever to do what so many of us had hoped we could do.

A prediction: There once was a fire wall between the commercial-entertainment side and the public service "news" side of broadcasting. That fire wall has been breached. It is the specter haunting the broadcast "news" business today. Soon an organization in the broadcast, cable or more likely dot.com convergence world will understand that, and a launch a new "news" outlet that will deserve the name and have in place a new fire wall that we can trust.



JOURNALISM FELLOWSHIPS

36TH ANNUAL COMPETITION

Applications are being accepted from print journalists and photojournalists with at least five years professional experience.

One-year grants of \$35,000 are awarded to pursue vital independent projects.

DEADLINE: Oct. 2, 2000 Fellows must be U.S. citizens.

WRITE. CALL OR E-MAIL:

The Alicia Patterson Foundation 1730 Pennsylvania Ave. NW Suite 850 Washington, DC 20006 (202) 393-5995

E-mail: apfengel@charm.net www.aliciapatterson.org



The Options Option

They're a Good Thing, but are they the Right Thing?

BY ANNE COLAMOSCA

ust before last Christmas, 143 editorial employees at *The New York Times* got a nice note in their email, word that they would be receiving stock options in the company. This represented a radical departure for an organization that, like most traditional media companies, had in the past confined its list of newsroom optioneers mostly to people at the top of the editorial pyramid.

With that move the *Times* marched into the wild and wooly world of options journalism. This world was, of course, created by pure dot-com media start-ups — iVillage, TheStreet.com, Salon.com, and the like. But in the intense competition for writers and editors, options are emerging as a significant component of compensation.

Although they are almost universal at the dot-com start-ups, there is no definitive data on how deeply options have penetrated newsrooms in general, only a sense that they are gaining ground, and fueling the imaginations of journalists across the board.

And fueling debate. Options journalism has undoubtedly increased the bottom line for a fair number of editors and reporters. But it is an open question as to whether the arrival of options into newsrooms generally is good or bad for journalism.

A stock option is the right to buy a certain amount of a company's stock after a certain date at a fixed price, usually the current price of the stock. If, after that

date, the stock has risen higher than that set price, the owner can buy the stock at that set price, and sell at a profit. Typically, an employee must wait at least a year to exercise any options, and, also typically, options vest gradually, over a period of time. They usually become worthless if an employee quits before the vesting date, and thus they help an employer hang on to talent.

The number of options granted to editorial employees tends to be a closely guarded secret, but the number granted to top executives is not. According to proxy statements for 1999 filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission: Arthur Sulzberger, Jr., publisher of The New York Times and chairman of the board of The New York Times Company, received 150,000 options on class A shares. The proxy used an options valuation model to estimate the present value of those options at \$1,392,000. At other companies, executives also had a nice year, thanks. John W. Madigan, c.e.o. of Tribune Company, received options on 1,124,382 shares; Gerald M. Levin, c.e.o. of Time Warner, 700,000 shares; Anthony Ridder, c.e.o. of Knight Ridder, 80,000; John J. Curley, c.e.o. of Gannett, 275,000. None of those proxy statements provided values.

Sometimes, the profit on options can be very high. For a chosen few, the AOL Time Warner merger is a pure bonanza. "On the day that Time Warner's directors approved the merger," says Graef Crystal, a leading expert on compensation and a columnist for Bloomberg.com, "employee options became instantly exercisable." He estimates that a staggering \$1.8 billion in options profits were "freed." Most of the potential loot ended up in the hands of top Time Warner executives, although some did seep down into newsrooms at Time publications and at CNN. But as one long-term *Time* employee stresses, "optioneers were still few and far between" on that 1.8 billion dollar day.

"The big media companies are extremely secretive about who they give options to," says Crystal. "My gut feeling is that most of them continue to give options only to a handful of top people. These companies are not trying to emulate the dot-com world."

There is, in fact, as Crystal and others point out, resistance to the headlong creation of a large options class in established companies. Top executives and boards of directors are well aware that widespread options programs dilute value for existing shareholders. And they are under constant pressure from institutional investors to limit the number of participants.

The late Times Mirror, on the other hand, is an old media company that was not so secretive or resistant. Beginning in January 1996, a few months after the arrival of Mark Willes, the company began giving all employees 100 stock options a year. Some got more, as a bonus. But for most employees who had received the options all five years, the cash-in value rose to about \$23,000 after Tribune Company announced in March that it would buy Times Mirror (see Options Fever, page 54). Willes said he wanted to share the wealth, and that he wanted his employ-

ees to be interested in increasing the company's wealth.

t one level it's hard for journalists to be anything but pleased with the rise of options in the newsroom. Some veterans believe that it signals the arrival of economic justice, after a long wait. "If you look at the incredible profits that media companies have made over the last several years, and the amount of advertising many publications have brought in," says Marshall Loeb, former top editor at Fortune, Money, and this magazine, "it's clear to me that most journalists are still vastly underpaid." CNN's Myron Kandel, a former New York Herald Tribune editor, agrees: "We all used to be ink-stained wretches. But my hope is that with the increase in jobs because of the new media, higher salaries and options will help us keep attracting high quality people who otherwise may have gone into other fields."

Nor is there any feeling among these veteran journalists that options are exerting a corrupting influence. "It's nuts to think that by giving them some stock options they will start behaving in a different way in terms of the way they cover news," adds Loeb. This view is shared by Gene Roberts, a former managing editor of The New York Times and executive editor of The Philadelphia Inquirer. At both places, says Roberts, "a handful of editors have gotten stock options for years. I never noticed that having stock options changed the way these editors covered the news." Roberts goes so far as to argue that options are actually healthier than bonuses. Bonuses are short-term, he argues, and can often give top editors an incentive to cut back in the newsroom. "I think stock options as a general rule are more long-range and involve the financial health of an organization over time. If an editor or reporter gets stock options issued when the price is low it might pay off over time. It's an investment in good journalism."

Some reporters nowhere near the apex of the journalism pyramid go even further and talk of options as a liberating force. John Piekarski, a thirty-nine- year old former McClatchy newspaper veteran, has had a career not untypical of migrants to dot-com land. He is currently editor-in-chief of AirMedia.com, which provides news for wireless Internet devices such as Palm Pilots and cell phones. He has been given more than 8,000 stock options there. "I didn't really hit the jackpot in the first Internet startup I worked in," says Piekarski. "It did involve a lot of ninety-hour workweeks for three years. The problem is the company actually issued too much stock and too many stock options. As a result, there was a reverse split, meaning if you had one hundred options, you ended up with forty. I decided to make another go of it. I am a strong believer in this current project because there is such an incredible future for the wireless business.

"Through most of its history, journalism has a record of low wages," Piekarski adds. "You could hope for steady wage increases and support the guild in the hope that it could bargain effectively for you. But when options came in, the whole equation changed. Now, a journalist can do something that he loves, and



THE GAME NOW IS TO FIGURE WHERE TO STAND ON THE MEDIA MONOPOLY BOARD AND WIND UP WITH THE BIG RED HOTELS

there's the possibility that he may also make a substantial amount of money doing so. It gives journalists freedom."

Some of them, anyway. Still, others argue that options journalism may be weaving a tangled ethical Web in new and subtle ways. Most who chose journalism in their college years felt that they were taking a vow of relative poverty as the price of admission to the fourth estate. They understood that they would never make as much money as fellow students who chose law, medicine, or even accounting. But with the explosion on the Net, the newsroom has moved closer to the center of the money culture.

Money talk sometimes displaces story talk. "A lot of testosterone is flying around the water coolers these days, and it's not all coming from men," one magazine editor jokes. "Getting a drink and hearing the latest story about who just got million-dollar options at a new Web start-up makes drinking water a health risk." The big game in the spring of 2000, says a magazine executive, "is to try and figure out where to stand on the media monopoly board to end up with the big red hotels. Nobody is at all sure right now where that's going to be." One recent University of Missouri journalism graduate is betting on a dot-com. He recently e-mailed his former professors, telling them that "the realization that my boss is younger than I am and is already a millionaire, makes it easy to get up and go to work every morning."

The sudden appearance of new millionaires in their midst has shaken up journalists and the journalistic psyche. Some feel that the old correlation between merit and reward has fallen by the wayside. "There is such an utter randomness to striking it rich on the Net that it is, in some sense, the 'revenge of the back benchers," says the magazine executive. "The best and the brightest at the white-hot center of the magazine world are not the people who have become millionaires. And yes, there is a natural human tendency to be jealous."

Jealousy, however, is less likely to be directed at those who left for the frontier than at people you see every day, if they got options and you did not. Although the options distributed at The New York Times were authorized by the company's board of directors, just who got them was decided by editors, in the manner of merit raises. Other employees learned about them when a memo from executive editor Joseph Lelyveld was posted, and when it was, a sense of division ran high.

"It certainly wasn't an open mutiny," says one mid-level editor, "but there were feelings of ill will." Says a reporter, "There naturally was a strong reaction of anger and hurt by those people who did not get them." Reporters at other publications talk about an increasing sense of division between the optioneers and the "non-optioned proletariat," as one member of that proletariat put it.

For both classes, stock quotes of the company they work for have become a stronger and stronger focus of interest. Does a reverence for profits and money grow with that focus? Bill Kovach, curator of the Nieman Foundation, believes that options will only intensify a trend that has already made journalists less sensitive to the life of the average working citizen. Journalists all know that news organizations have to make money, he says, but "Stockoptions journalism just makes things incredibly worse. The gap, both financially and intellectually, just grows deeper." Journalists, he notes, seldom say, "let's invite this assembly-line worker to write for us awhile, so we'll have some sense of what's really going on out there. This kind of person no longer has a voice in our newsrooms."

On another front, a new dimension has been added to the always-subtle relationship between business and editorial. With most media companies in an intense hunt to build their dot-com operations, editors and reporters far from the top have been drawn into discussions with advertising people and business development departments. "When I walk around our offices these days," says a veteran journalist, "I am struck by how many meetings are going on between reporters and business-side types seeking to find ways to make the dot-com profitable." And it raises again the question of whether options have some impact on a journalist's thinking.

To bridge the financial incentives between journalists still in traditional jobs and those on the Net, many media companies have either introduced or are planning to introduce the tracking stock, which is becoming coin of the realm for more and more companies throughout the economy. Trackers are a class of common stock whose value is tied to one segment of a company's business, typically a high-growth segment.

Many of the newest tracking stocks — such as ZDNet, a subsidiary of Ziff-Davis, and Liberty Media Group, a subsidiary of AT&T — are tied to the Internet or telecommunications. With tracking stocks, though, the parent company and its board of directors maintain complete control of the new subsidiary, since a share in a tracking stock is actually an equity interest in the parent company.

The New York Times Company filed plans for a tracking stock — NYTD, or New York Times Digital — with the SEC recently, and if approved by Times shareholders, it will go on sale at the New York Stock Exchange. NYTD would include NYTimes.com, Boston. com, NYToday.com, WineToday.com,

OPTIONS FEVER: THE COURANT GOES (A LITTLE) CRAZY

BY DAN HAAR

n the days after Tribune Co. declared that it would buy Times Mirror Co., a writer here at *The Hartford Courant* was heard imploring the paper's graphics artists to cash in their stock options immediately or risk losing them. (There was no such risk.) An editor at the newspaper wondered whether it was true that shares in Times Mirror had briefly reached \$105, \$10 over the Tribune offer. (There was no such number.)

As I watched the opening tip-off of the NCAA men's basketball tournament, on March 16, three days after the announcement, I could hear three separate conversations in our business news office about stock options. The city desk was no different. Times Mirror employees had received stock options as part of compensation since 1996, and after the Tribune offer, the term March Madness came to have a new meaning here.

Five years of options — most of us got 100 of them early each year, priced at face value — were worth roughly \$23,000 after the takeover agreement. At the *Courant*, there were stories about two poor souls in a bureau who cashed theirs out the week before the buyout, for a pittance. There was envy of the handful of fortunate reporters who had been awarded 600 extra options for excellent work. Mostly, the windfall prodded discussions about financial strategies and the politics of wealth. The same was true at other Times Mirror newspapers. "There were several dozen Republicans created," quipped Baltimore *Sun* metro editor Tony Barbieri, "when they realized how much of that money was going in taxes."

There was not, it might be noted, a lot of gnashing of teeth about the fate of Times Mirror. "I don't see anybody crying about this Tribune merger," said Fran Silverman, the *Courant*'s consumer affairs writer. What's this? A newspaper merger with no fretting about layoffs, corporate micromanagement, the general loss of free expression? Not exactly. "The short-term concern is over stock options," Silverman explained. "The long-term concern is over journalistic integrity."

A few people did see all the money talk as a sign of pollution in the ranks of writers, editors, and artists. "Their heart isn't in this place anymore," said Larry Williams, a features editor and former state capitol bureau chief. "If it were, they'd be thinking about the *Courant* instead of what this means to their pocketbooks." In columnist Susan Campbell's piece that week, she said of her colleagues, "Pretty soon, you're watching the stock market and caring about things like profit margin, when, in fact, you got into the news business to look with a jaundiced eye at that very kind of thing."

Indeed, the buzz about pensions, benefits, and, mostly, those options, certainly did overwhelm any big-picture journalism questions, at least in the first week or so. Most *Courant* employees appeared unconcerned about any moral hazard of watching their bottom line. "It's not an evil thing," said Paul Stern, night deputy state editor at the *Courant*, "that professional journalists who do this to feed their families show a keen interest in their own economic welfare."

Evil or not, for a few days we were a sort of lab experiment in corporate journalism — an experiment that, according to *Courant* editor Brian Toolan, brought a normal, healthy response from journalists. "Until about 1992, I never heard the terms 'newspaper' and 'shareholder value' said in the same breath," Toolan said. "Since then it's a Greek chorus." But Toolan does not see stock market concerns as the end of the world, as detracting from the *Courant*'s mission. "To me," he said, "it's more of a curiosity."

Dan Haar covers economic matters for the Courant, and also covered the Tribune-Times Mirror buyout. Abuzz.com, and Golf Digest.com — all tied to publications owned by the Times Company, Significantly, options on the tracker, at least as described in an early prospectus, may be given as compensation to Times employees those who work mainly for the traditional publications as well as those whose main jobs are to feed the Net sites. "I think it is a way of trying to hold on to Net workers - both editorial people and programmers," says a respected Times reporter. "If it proves to be a hot IPO, that would naturally keep a lot of people there." Another media giant, Knight Ridder, has also filed to set up a tracking stock - Knight Ridder.com - to be based on a number of its newspaper operations, such as Charlotte.com.

"If a tracking stock is carved out for the Internet, logically it will have a different financial destiny than the old media stock," postulates Gene Roberts. "It could be better or it could be worse." It does seem conceivable to Roberts that the new-media stocks could in the long run do better if they are peeled off from the big media companies. "But, he says, "the new-media stocks are often Alice in Wonderland."

Yet in the end the destinies of old media stocks and their tracking stocks will be intertwined. There may be no way around a problem that some corporate finance experts see inherent in the tracking stock craze: a real schizophrenia that develops between the old parent company and its new spin-off.

ptions are creating some euphoria. Yet a striking fact about last year, 1999, as options gained ground, is that median wage increases in journalism were, in the aggregate, minuscule, according to the basic Bureau of Labor Statistics data. For editors and reporters, the median weekly wage increased by 3 percent. This was lower than the wage increase for workers as a whole (4 percent). And it was below the average wage increase that journalists had received in the preceding five years — 4.5 percent.

Thus, for the first time in five years the average journalist got a smaller wage increase than the average worker in the economy as a whole and in most of the other professions. (From 1994, when stagnation in U.S. real wages came to an end, through 1998, journalists' salaries rose 17 percent, versus 11 percent for the

total workforce.) The wage of the typical male journalist actually declined last year — from \$812 a week to \$803 a week, down 2 percent. On the other hand, women fared hugely better, with the average wage rising from \$616 in 1998 to \$709 in 1999, surely reflecting women's steady rise in the newsroom.

Internet revolution or not, average journalists are just "not getting their fair share of profits," argues Marshall Loeb, "not with the amount of money the media conglomerates have made during this long boom."

Now we add options to the cocktail, and their effect on average compensation bears watching. Staff level reporters and editors at the handful of large media conglomerates will emerge as the central players in the journalism options game.

Some will win and some will lose. Unless they are re-priced, as occasionally happens, options are only valuable if the stock floats above their fixed price. If they fall below it they are "underwater," worthless. Journalists who got options at TheStreet.com, the financial news site (The New York Times Company owns 6.3 percent), are getting nervous. Many of some eighty journalists at the operation were attracted to the job at least

partly by the options that they were offered.

But: the fifty-two-week high for the stock is \$71.25. At press time, the price was around \$6.

"People who came in and got stock options at higher prices are understandably upset," says a journalist there. "But there is no mass exodus right now. If the stock price is still at a low point six months from now, I think, the staff may get much more upset."

Reporters and editors at TheStreet. com are paid well, he adds. "We are paid comparable salaries, or more, to those being paid at *The New York Times* or *The Wall Street Journal*. The stock options are just gravy."

When a stock is rising, the gravy can be good. For one thing, "The business side can always take away bonuses, if they decide the newsroom hasn't met its targets," says Roberts. But options that vest over several years, he points out, are "much harder to get rid of."

And as long as they stay around, so will the questions that they raise.

Anne Colamosca, a former Business Week staff writer, is co-author, with William Wolman, of The Judas Economy.

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL OF JOURNALISM

is again seeking applications for the

JOHN J. McCLOY FELLOWSHIPS

sponsored by

THE AMERICAN COUNCIL ON GERMANY

The fellowships provide for travel and study in Germany with expenses paid. Applicants must have at least five years of working experience as a journalist, and be able to devote four consecutive weeks to travel in Germany within 12-18 months of the award. Applicants should send a written proposal of a project that may treat German domestic or international matters relating to historical or current questions or anticipated developments. Fluency in German is not a requirement. Please include a resume with your project submission. Send to:

Robert Petretti
John J. McCloy Fellowships
Graduate School of Journalism, Room 201
Columbia University
2950 Broadway, New York, NY 10027
E-mail: rcp2@columbia.edu

Deadline is June 15, 2000

Would You Create Another Newspaper to Compete with Your Own? In Miami, the Herald Did

BY MIKE CLARY

ike most major American cities, Miami for years has had just one daily newspaper. But in recent months a feisty hometown challenger to The Miami Herald has emerged, speaking with a new voice, with plenty of attitude, and in Spanish. And that voice is coming from a very surprising quarter the sixth floor of The Miami Herald's own headquarters alongside Biscayne Bay. The paper? El Nuevo Herald. Spawned as an insert to The Miami Herald in 1976, it is now out on its own as a sturdy, stand-alone daily that's giving the market's Latino readers vibrant, often raffish coverage of world and local events - in stiff competition with the paper that gave it birth.

On a recent Thursday afternoon, Carlos M. Castañeda, 68, El Nuevo Herald's editor, is bent over his desk roughing out layouts for the next day's page one. The choices are wide: from President Clinton's visit to India to a local study of an alarming increase locally in venereal disease. And, of course, there is Elián. Almost every day since last November there has been something in the paper about the six-year-old Cuban boy at the center of the international soap opera with the cold war soundtrack.

But on this newsy day, Castañeda quickly sees that he has something that will kick Elián Gonzalez inside the paper. From his stack of art he chooses a sketch of the exiled Cuban writer Guillermo Cabrera Infante, and decides it will go above the fold. "I don't think they have this story," says Castañeda, referring to The Miami Herald, whose newsroom is just one floor below. "I don't see any mention of it in their budget."



Casteñeda (in bow tie) at work: looking for something different

Indeed, as readers of both The Miami | Herald and the Spanish-language El Nuevo Herald can discover the next morning, Cabrera Infante's decision to return an honorary degree to Florida International University - in protest over the state university's hosting a delegation of academics from Cuba - did not appear in The Miami Herald. English-only readers would have to wait a day to learn about the flap, and even then they would get only an item, tucked inside the local section.

Chalk up one more coup for the guerrilleros of El Nuevo Herald. And credit Miami Herald publisher Alberto Ibargüen for making Miami once again a two-newspaper town.

When Ibargüen was named publisher

of The Miami Herald in August 1998, he 3 was not ordered to make peace with the city's fervently anti-Castro exile community. Nor was he handed a target figure for reversing the newspaper's precipitous circulation decline, or given any specific instructions on how to restore the paper's fading journalistic reputation.

"I was asked one question," Ibargüen says, recalling his discussions with chairman P. Anthony Ridder and other Knight Ridder Inc. executives. "Can you increase the profit margin from 18 percent to 22 percent in three years?' And I said yes." Ibargüen made clear from the start that he was far different from his predecessor, David Lawrence, Jr. First of all, Ibargüen is a lawyer and a businessman who does

CJR COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

one year (six issues) \$27.95

Add \$4 for foreign subscription.

□ bill me

Name

☐ check enclosed

Address

City, State, Zip

B835



BUSINESS REPLY MAIL FIRST CLASS MAIL PERMIT NO. 65 MT. MORRIS, IL

POSTAGE-WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

COLUMBIA JOURNALISM REVIEW

Lillian IIII and blad a Balladia Hadda Hadda H



not think his role includes coaxing south Florida's fractious, multi-ethnic community into one harmonious chorus. "I am not a political person, and I don't want to be a player in this town," says the dapper fifty-six-year-old.

Secondly, Ibargüen is of Cuban and Puerto Rican heritage, at ease in Spanish and English, in what is the most thoroughly bilingual of America's big cities. Although he was raised in the Northeast and schooled in the Englishonly executive offices of Times Mirror's Newsday, New York Newsday and the Hartford Courant, he understands the Latino passions that percolate through Miami like so much dark, rich café.

So soon after arriving here in 1995 as publisher of El Nuevo Herald, Ibargüen realized that in order for the paper's circulation to grow, it had to shuck its identity as merely a supplement to and translation of The Miami Herald, and be made available to Spanish readers separately. Lawrence resisted, but Ibargüen insisted. It took two years, but finally, in May 1998, readers were offered the option of home delivery or buying single copies of El Nuevo Herald. To transform it into a real newspaper, he lured Castañeda out of semi-retirement in Puerto Rico and told him: "Give me a newspaper that cannot be confused with The Miami Herald." And that's exactly what Castañeda has done. El Nuevo Herald is a hybrid, a flashy mix of Latin élan, Cuban exile political fervor, and People magazine. It's a broadsheet with a tabloid mentality, and Castañeda says he has only one aim: "Put out a good newspaper that sells."

The selling is important. Almost half of El Nuevo Herald's circulation -94,000 on Sunday, 86,000 daily, and growing - comes from street sales. Bold graphics, big pictures, lots of color and eye-catching headlines have made the paper one that could easily compete in the racks at supermarket check-out counters. And Castañeda does not shy away from splashing opinion all over page one. The seventy-two-point headline over a six-column photo of a Cuban rafter being subdued on the beach by U.S. Border Patrol agents last spring shouted: "iBOCHORNO!" (Shame!).

In the fourteen months since Castañeda took the helm, he has happily embraced what he calls the "People magazine concept." The formula is working. Circulation gains of 6 percent on Sunday and 9 percent daily make El Nuevo Herald one of the fastest-growing newspapers in the U.S., and has carried the onetime give-away into a virtual tie with La Opinion of Los Angeles as the nation's largest Spanish-language daily. El Nuevo Herald's advertising revenues also climbed 10 percent in 1999, to more than \$21 million.

In absolute numbers, Miami is only the third

ID RETURNS ELIAN TO FAT

largest Spanish-speaking market in the U.S. behind Los Angeles and New York, but the culture runs deeper here. In Miami-Dade County, perhaps as many as half of the 2 million residents speak Spanish, and that percentage is expected to grow into the 60 percent range by the year 2020. And in comparison to Latinos in Los Angeles and

Competing: front pages on the Elián Gonzalez seizure

The Miami Herald

pictured more than once above the fold in El Nuevo Herald. "Yes, Ricky Martin," says Castañeda, only a little defensive. "If people want Ricky Martin, why not, especially if we don't have anything better?"

Iim Mullin, editor of Miami's alternative weekly New Times, likes Castañeda's competitive spirit. But some days, says Mullin, "I pick up El Nuevo Herald and I can't believe I am looking at the front

page of a daily newspaper.' Ibargüen says the same thing. "I love the surprise of the paper," says the pub-

FOR THE PAPER TO GROW, IT HAD TO SHUCK ITS IDENTITY AS MERELY A SUPPLEMENT TO AND TRANSLATION OF ITS PARENT

New York, the Miami Latino market is more educated, more middle-class.

"I want stories that affect the pockets and the hearts of people," says Castañeda. "One of the problems with most newspapers is that they're too boring. They impose ideas of what news is instead of listening to what people want. Here we cover the news and try to be a little light, too.'

Being a little light can often lead to being a little silly. With an editorial staff of eighty-four, including just eleven general assignment reporters, competing against The Miami Herald's editorial staff of 425 means that the scoops don't come often. Celebrities like Gloria Estefan, Jose Canseco, and Ricky Martin have all been lisher, "You can't predict what's going to be on page one. That's great. But sometimes, I do pick it up and think, 'Where did we leave our brains?' "

He asked that question vehemently one October morning last year when El Nuevo Herald carried only a brief mention of The Miami Herald's investigation of a contractor scandal at Miami International Airport, a series that would later be submitted as a candidate for a Pulitzer Prize. Castañeda denies ignoring the story because it was the work of his downstairs rival; Miami was rocked by a nasty tropical storm that weekend, he says, and the aftermath was of far more interest to his readers.

In a career that began in pre-Castro

APPLICATIONS INVITED



Knight International Press Fellowships

Live abroad for up to nine months and share your skills with colleagues in emerging democracies.

Next Deadline: July 15

U.S. Newspaper, Radio and TV Professionals needed with the following experience:

- ✓ Advertising
- ✓ Business Management
- ✓ Broadcast Production
- ✓ Circulation
- ✓ Curriculum Development
- ✓ Design and Layout
- ✓ Pre-press Production
- ✓ Reporting and Editing

For more information or an application, contact:

International Center for Journalists 1616 H Street, NW, Third Floor Washington, DC 20006 USA

> Tel: 202-737-3700 Fax: 202-737-0530 Web: www.icfj.org E-mail: knight@icfj.org

Cuba and included a long stint as editor of the Puerto Rican daily El Nuevo Día, Castañeda has earned both money and respect as an editor and a consultant to newspapers. He expanded El Nuevo Herald's coverage of Latin American sending reporters to hot spots such as Venezuela and Colombia. (Reporters from El Nuevo Herald and The Miami Herald are almost never granted visas to enter Cuba.) He revamped the newspaper's sections, with more graphics and color.

"Many people thought it was impossible to do anything with this paper," says Castañeda. "Well, it was never a

That means Cuba and Fidel Castro are big stories virtually every day. And that can lead to excess. As New Times's Mullin points out, when it comes to Cuba coverage, "El Nuevo can be sensational, hyperbolic, pandering to the worst instincts." In The Miami Herald newsroom, the Spanish-language neighbors on the floor above are admired for their sources on the island and within the exile community. The Herald's bilingual reporters read El Nuevo Herald closely, but with a very critical eye, pointing to deviations from standard American journalism. "Carlos has turned that paper around," says one,



'I LOVE THE SURPRISE OF THE PAPER BUT SOMETIMES I DO THINK "WHERE DID WE LEAVE OUR BRAINS"

-ALBERTO IBARGÜEN

paper. It was a supplement. I wanted to create some excitement."

His confidence is contagious. While giving the newspaper a bold new look, Castañeda has performed a near-miracle in the newsroom by cutting staff, boosting salaries, and raising morale — all at the same time. "Carlos is the kind of boss everyone should have," says staffer Peter Katel, fifty-one, a former Newsweek correspondent in Miami. "He is demanding, but his demands are strictly professional. We are competing with the behemoth downstairs. My idea when I come to work is to do something original. That's the challenge — to do big stories that everyone in town is going to talk about."

And it happens; David does kick Goliath's butt on occasion. In the last twelve months, El Nuevo Herald reporters beat their Miami Herald counterparts with reports on a Hialeah cop scandal, and design flaws in a new \$18 million air traffic control tower at Miami International Airport. Katel scored with a story about an e-mail from the president's Cuban affairs adviser warning of growing U.S.-Cuba tensions that was written the day before Cuban MIGs shot down two exile planes in February 1996. The only occurrence that evokes more newsroom "Bravos!" than seeing a translated El Nuevo Herald story in The Miami Herald is evidence that Fidel Castro himself is reading the paper. And that has happened, too.

El Nuevo Herald's readers reflect the Latino population of greater Miami — more than half are Cuban-American.

who asked not to be named. "But is it edited too loosely? Sometimes I wonder."

In Miami, where exile politics tends to seep into everything, Ibargüen and Castañeda do not deny that both the English and Spanish-language newspapers are staunchly anti-Castro. That sentiment slips into the news columns. In its coverage of a press conference held by a former Cuban intelligence agent, the newspaper did not report that in his remarks the man favored closer ties between the U.S. and the Castro government, an idea that is anathema to many exiles (see Darts & Laurels, CJR, January/February). Castañeda says he was not aware of the omission until days later, and denies it was done as a function of policy. But El Nuevo Herald has never run editorials, and Castañeda has chosen not to break with that tradition. "Who is speaking in an editorial?' asks Castañeda. Some committee? I prefer to have columnists speak, in signed pieces. That's what readers prefer."

Like Ibargüen, Castañeda keeps a low community profile. He doesn't give interviews to the rabidly anti-Castro Spanish-language radio stations, or write opinion pieces himself. Still, he says, he gets calls often from exile leaders who want the paper to take a harder line against Cuba's communist regime. "I am so sure of my product that I cannot be pressured," says the editor. "I am here to make a good paper. That's all."

Clary is Miami bureau chief of the Los Angeles Times.

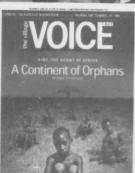
MARK SCHOOFS



1999 Pulitzer Prize Winner

International Reporting
For his 8-part series

AIDS: The Agony of Africa



To read the entire series go to www.villagevoice.com/specials/africa

VOICE VIJINGE

LISTS

The Pulitzer Prizes



Public Service

The Washington Post

Finalists: Chicago Tribune; The Philadelphia Inquirer

Breaking News Reporting

The Denver Post staff

Finalists: The Raleigh (N.C.) News & Observer staff; The Oregonian staff

Investigative Reporting

Sang-Hun Choe, Charles J. Hanley, and Martha Mendoza of The Associated Press

Finalists: *The New York Times* — Kurt Eichenwald and Gina Kolata; *The Blade*, Toledo, Ohio — Sam Roe

Explanatory Reporting

Eric Newhouse of the Great Falls (Mont.) Tribune

Finalists: *The Oregonian* — Brent Walth and Alex Pulaski; *The New York Times* — Michael Winerip

Beat Reporting

George Dohrmann of the St. Paul Pioneer Press

Finalists: The New York Times —
David Cay Johnston; The Washington
Post — Robert O'Harrow Jr.

National Reporting

The Wall Street Journal staff

Finalists: St. Petersburg Times — Anne Hull; Chicago Tribune — David Jackson and Cornelia Grumman

International Reporting

Mark Schoofs of The Village Voice

Finalists: The Associated Press staff; The Washington Post staff

Feature Writing

J.R. Moehringer of Los Angeles Times

Finalists: The Washington Post — David Finkel; St. Petersburg Times — Anne Hull

Commentary

Paul A. Gigot of *The Wall Street Journal* Finalists: *The Washington Post* Writers Group — Michael Kelly; *The Washington Post* — Colbert I. King

Criticism

Henry Allen of *The Washington Post*Finalists: *The New York Times* —
Michael Kimmelman; *The New York*Observer — Andrew Sarris

Editorial Writing

John C. Bersia of *The Orlando Sentinel*Finalists: *The Washington Post* — Fred
Hiatt; *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* — Philip
Kennicott

Editorial Cartooning

Joel Pett of the Lexington (Ky.) Herald-Leader

Finalists: *The State*, Columbia, S.C. — Robert Ariail; *The Christian Science Monitor* — Clay Bennett

Breaking News Photography

The Denver Rocky Mountain News photo staff

Finalists: San Francisco Examiner — Lucy Atkins; The Seattle Times photo staff

Feature Photography

Carol Guzy, Michael Williamson, and Lucian Perkins of *The Washington Post* Finalists: *The Miami Herald* — Nuri Vallbona and Candace Barbot; Worcester (Mass.) *Telegram & Gazette* photo staff

LETTERS AND DRAMA

Fiction

Interpreter of Maladies by Jhumpa Lahiri (Mariner Books/Houghton Mifflin Company)

Finalists: Waiting by Ha Jin (Pantheon Books); Close Range: Wyoming Stories by Annie Proulx (Scribner)

Drama

Dinner With Friends by Donald Margulies Finalists: In The Blood by Suzan-Lori Parks; King Hedley II by August Wilson

History

Freedom From Fear: The American People in Depression and War, 1929-1945 by David M. Kennedy (Oxford University Press)

Finalists: Into the American Woods: Negotiators on the Pennsylvania Frontier by James H. Merrell (W.W. Norton & Company); The Cousins' Wars: Religion, Politics, & The Triumph of Anglo-America by Kevin Phillips (Basic Books)

Biography

Véra (Mrs. Vladmir Nabokov) by Stacy Schiff (Random House)

Finalists: Clear Springs: A Memoir by Bobbie Ann Mason (Random House); Galileo's Daughter: A Historical Memoir of Science, Faith, and Love by Dava Sobel (Walker & Co.)

Poetry

Repair by C.K. Williams (Farrar, Straus and Giroux)

Finalists: Elegy for the Southern Drawl by Rodney Jones (Houghton Mifflin Company); Midnight Salvage, Poems 1995-1998 by Adrienne Rich (W.W. Norton & Company)

General Non-Fiction

Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II by John W. Dower (W.W. Norton Company/The New Press)

Finalists: The Elegant Universe: Superstrings, Hidden Dimensions, and the Quest for the Ultimate Theory by Brian Greene (W.W. Norton & Company); Living on the Wind: Across the Hemisphere with Migratory Birds by Scott Weidensaul (North Point Press/Farrar, Straus and Giroux).

Music

Life is a Dream, Opera in Three Acts: Act II, Concert Version by Lewis Spratlan

Finalists: Serenata Concertante by Donald Martino; contes de feés by John Zorn



We're honored.



In journalism, there is no higher recognition than the Pulitzer Prize.

This year, The Washington Post is proud to announce that our colleagues have won three Pulitzer Prizes, including the top prize, the Gold Medal for Public Service.

Public Service • The Washington Post, notably for the work of Katherine Boo For "Invisible Lives" and "Invisible Deaths," on the mistreatment and deaths of the city's mentally retarded in deplorable group homes.

Criticism • Henry Allen
For his writing on photography, including his reviews of shows of photographs by Annie Leibovitz, Augustus Washington and Henri Cartier-Bresson.

Feature Photography • Carol Guzy, Lucian Perkins and Michael Williamson For their vivid, intimate and involving photographs of the human cost of the Kosovo War.



In addition, Post reporters and editors were finalists for five more Pulitzer Prizes.

International Reporting • Michael Dobbs, Bill Drozdiak, David Finkel, Peter Finn, Jeff Smith and Dan Williams

Feature Reporting • David Finkel

Beat Reporting . Robert O'Harrow

Editorial Writing • Fred Hiatt

Commentary . Colby King



Our sincere congratulations and thanks to all for your exceptional work.



The Washington Post

LISTS

The duPont Awards

Here are the winners of the Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards in Television and Radio Journalism

Gold Baton

PBS Bill Moyers and Public Affairs Television for "Facing the Truth"

Silver Baton

ABC News and Diane Sawyer for 20/20 "The Unwanted Children

"The Unwanted Children of Russia"

CBS News and Bob Simon for 60 Minutes II "The Shame of Srebrenica"

Frontline and WGBH-TV, Boston "The Triumph of Evil" on PBS

CNN and Candy Crowley "Coverage of the Impeachment and Trial of President Clinton" New England Cable News, Newton, Massachusetts "In-Depth Reporting"

KTVX-TV, Salt Lake City, and Chris Vanocur "Investigative Reporting on the Olympics Bribery Scandal"

WTHR-TV, Indianapolis "Guarding the Guardians"

WMTW-TV, Auburn, Maine, and Christine Young "Investigative Reports on the Christian Civic League" Youth Radio, Berkeley "E-Mails from Kosovo" on National Public Radio

SoundVision Productions "The DNA Files" on National Public Radio

Walter Brock and P.O.V. "If I Can't Do It" on PBS

Stanley Nelson "The Black Press: Soldier Without Swords" on PBS

National Magazine Awards Finalists

General Excellence

(Under 100,000 circ.)
Context
I.D. Magazine
Lingua Franca
Nest
Print
The Sciences

(100,000 to 400,000 circ.) Business 2.0 National Geographic Adventure Saveur Teacher Magazine Texas Monthly

(400,000 to 1,000,000 circ.)
Fast Company
GQ
Marie Claire
The New Yorker
The Source

(Over 1,000,000 circ.) Entertainment Weekly Men's Health National Geographic Time Vanity Fair

Personal Service

Consumer Reports
Esquire
PC Computing
Redbook
Smart Money

Special Interest

Bon Appetit I.D. Magazine National Geographic Traveler The Oxford American Saveur

Reporting

Harper's Magazine Human Rights Quarterly The New Yorker (2 nominations) Vanity Fair

Feature

Esquire The New Yorker Philadelphia Magazine Spin Sports Illustrated

Profiles

The Atlantic Monthly Esquire Philadelphia Magazine Sports Illustrated (2 nominations)

Public Interest

Governing Harper's Magazine The New Yorker Sports Illustrated Texas Monthly

Design

ESPN The Magazine Fast Company National Geographic Adventure Nest W

Photography

Harper's Bazaar National Geographic The New Yorker Rolling Stone Vanity Fair W

Fiction

The Georgia Review Harper's Magazine The New Yorker (2 nominations) Zoetrope: All-Story

Essays

Esquire Forbes ASAP House & Garden The New Yorker The Sciences

Reviews and Criticism

Esquire
The Nation
The New Yorker (2 nominations)
Premier

General Excellence in New Media

Atlantic Unbound Business Week Online SmartMoney.com TheStandard.com Zoetrope:All-Story

A CONTROVERSIAL CALL AND A PULITZER PRIZE WINNING EFFORT.

Six months later, the university released its long-awaited

day of vindication.

people on the award and on



newspapering at its finest.

>KNIGHT RIDDER>

in newspapers.

REAL Cities

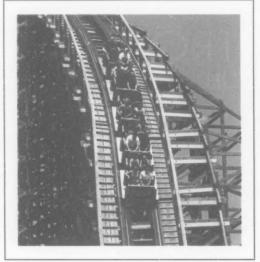
The San Antonio Express-News discovered so many unreported amusement park injuries that even thrill-seekers screamed.

By law, any injury suffered at an amusement park in Texas must be reported to the state. So, San Antonio Express-News reporter John Tedesco decided to check the state's database

to research a story on which rides had caused the most injuries. What he found – or, more accurately, didn't find – led to an even bigger story.

The numbers in the database were suspiciously low. Tedesco knew from news reports and lawsuits of serious injuries and even one death that were not reflected

in the state records. As he dug deeper into the history of individual parks and rides, it became clear that a frightening number of accidents were not being reported. Even worse, the state agency charged with enforcement lacked the resources to follow up on its own and correct the problem.



Through Tedesco's extensive research of paramedic reports and his interviews with victims, a powerful story on the pervasiveness of unreported injuries at amusement parks emerged. In San Antonio, where the amusement park industry is a major component in tourism, this held great significance. As a result, the Texas Department of Insurance began its own inquiry. Now, individual

amusement parks are being forced to comply with the law that mandates the reporting of all injuries. Bringing the truth to light is one more way that Hearst Newspapers enrich readers' lives every day.

See more Journalism of Distinction on the web at www.MySanAntonio.com



The Newsroom Trust And Other Novel Ideas



fter all these years lamenting how profits trump excellence in newspapering, wouldn't it be a relief to find solutions? That's what Stan Tiner has been setting his mind to since January, when the Gaylord family decided he wasn't their idea of a Dai-

ly Oklahoman execu-BY GENEVA OVERHOLSER tive editor.

Geneva Overholser (genevaoh@aol. com), a syndicated columnist for The Washington Post Writers Group, writes regularly for CIR about newspapers. Among positions she has held are editorial writer for The New York Times, editor of The Des Moines Register, ombudsman for The Washington Post. She also served nine years on the Pulitzer

Prize board.

"Maybe I've been done a favor," he told me, "because when you don't have a job, you don't have anything better to do than sit around and think about how things in the newspaper business are going." Tiner came up with an idea about how we might boost journalistic excellence, and he unveiled it in a speech to the New England Newspaper Association:

Why not dedicate a certain percentage of each newspaper's profits as a set-aside for the operation of a superior newsroom? I don't know what that number should be - one-tenth of a percent or three-tenths or a halfpercent? But set that number aside and let a trust of editors and reporters, with some publicrepresentation, be in charge of that?

The Newsroom Trust" Tiner calls this: TNT. It "would be above and beyond the regular newsroom budget. It might range from a few thousand dollars at a small weekly to a few hundred thousand, or a million dollars at larger-sized papers. But the trust would allow for excellence that many editors no longer see possible. It would allow for travel, or research, or the hiring of writing coaches, or an investigative team to attack a large community

"Think of the flowering this

would make possible in journalism across the land. I predict that, within the first year of its existence, the American people would view us in a totally different light. But more important, we would view ourselves in a new and improving way, giving hope and work satisfaction a place in a profession where frustration and cynicism have reigned."

You may need some convincing: Who would make this come about? What would bring a publisher to do it? But think, for just a moment: What a nice (what a reasonable) idea it is: a percentage of profits for excellence.

If Tiner's TNT caught on with just a few publishers, it could grow quickly. As with published

'A PERCENTAGE OF PROFITS FOR EXCELLENCE. WHAT A NICE (WHAT A REASONABLE) IDEA IT IS.

lists of philanthropists' donations, its very existence would make publishers want to be on it. and corporations want to see their papers represented.

Another cure that has long appealed to me would also rely on the power that comes with making information public. If we could establish an expectation that our newspapers' business practices would be as open as we try to make everyone else's be, we'd see fewer 40 percent profit margins coupled with shrinking

Just imagine, if it became cus-

tomary to report on ourselves or. more likely, each other, so assiduously that readers could:

■ Trace the pattern of their local paper's beginning-reporter salaries, and compare them to salaries in other local companies and to those of reporters elsewhere.

Chart the percentage of newsprint devoted to newshole, and how it's changed over the years.

M Know what percentage of revenues go to the newsroom, and how that figure has changed over recent years.

Be familiar with the paper's profit margins, and how they have tracked newsprint price increases - and decreases.

If the public knew more of such matters, the first response might be an even lower opinion of us - so evident would be our emphasis on high profitability. But the next response would likely be a newly knowledgeable push for papers to better serve their communities.

Last September, when Robert Rivard was all set to leave the San Antonio Express-News to become executive editor of The Miami Herald, do you know how the Hearst Corporation kept him? By offering him resources for the paper. Seven figures, according to the Austin Chronicle, for more staffers, higher salaries, a bigger newshole. And Rivard said, "To walk away from that was something I couldn't do."

I'm hoping the profit-pressure pendulum has swung so far that the return toward excellence is coming, and the time for ideas like Stan's and mine is nigh. So I look for harbingers. In the Rivard story, I like to think I've found

A Journalist's Mission in Colombia: Reporting Atrocities Is Not Enough



Thave never known a "normal" time in Colombia, my country. The activities by Marxist revolutionaries who want to bring down the government started some four decades ago, years before I was born.

Then, most Colombians did not

BY MARIA CRISTINA CABALLERO Worry a lot

Maria Cristina Caballero is an investigative editor for the Colombian weekly, Semana. Currently on leave she is writing a book about the civil war in Colombia. In 1999, she was honored by the Committee to Protect Journalists with an International Press Freedom Award.

about the guerrillas, who were far away in the jungles. Now, the movement is stronger than ever - the guerrillas have killed policemen on the edge of Colombia's major cities and exploded car bombs within some cities. Fueled by money from drug trafficking "protection" businesses and kidnappings, the guerrillas control over 40 percent of the country, including a large "demilitarized" zone that the government gave to them as a first step in talking about peace. The largest group, known by the acronym FARC, has between 15,000 and 20,000 troops, while another group, the ELN, has 5,000.

The so-called "paramilitary" forces — private armies that oppose the guerrillas, mostly by terrorizing villages that allegedly aid them — have between 5,000 and 7,000 troops. The paramilitaries also are financed by protection of and "taxes" on drug growers. Narco-terrorism, of course, has been a problem for two decades in Colombia. And when terror has not been enough, there is always cash — government officials at all levels have been implicated in bribery scandals.

In such a troubled country, the role of the journalist has always been open to debate. Do we simply report the atrocities, or try to find ways to stop them? Just reporting what goes on in my country is perilous enough — fifty journalists

have been killed trying to do their jobs in the last decade, five last year.

Yet, as bad as things are for Colombians in general and journalists in particular, there are some signs of change. Representatives of the FARC recently went to Europe to talk with officials and private entrepreneurs about alternative economic models. The FARC's political leader, known as "Tirofijo," or "sure shot," met with Colombian business leaders. The leader of the paramilitaries, Carlos Castaño, recently showed his face, for the first time ever, during a television interview. Millions of Colombians have demonstrated in the streets. asking for peace.

What lies behind this new openness? Perhaps a good part of it is the result of stories by journalists who have been trying to report on ways to solve our country's problems. At the leading daily newspaper, El Tiempo, a special reporting group, the Peace Unit, was created a year ago. Media for Peace, a new network of journalists, has influenced reporters to write more balanced accounts. Of course, trying to actively point to solutions to problems is a dangerous role for journalists - my colleague (and former boss). Francisco Santos, editor-in-chief of El Tiempo, in March had to flee Bogotá for Miami. Many others have been forced to flee - I was one of thirteen journalists who left last year after receiving death threats.

Still, despite all the risks, I strongly believe that journalists have a duty not only to expose injustices but also to try to improve the situation of their countries. "The Social Responsibility of the Journalist" was the title of my thesis when I graduated from Javeriana University in Bogotá in 1984;

carrying out that mission has been my goal ever since. As a journalist, I must try to find out, from all the factions, what their perspectives are, no matter how dangerous that is for me personally. So I have interviewed not only the leader of the paramilitary forces, but also the military leader of the FARC.

My first interview with Castaño, in 1997, is seared in my mind because that meeting led to an unprecedented report, "Peace on the Table," that shows that there is hope to find a way out of the daily horror.

By coincidence, on the very same day I went back to my job as editor of investigations at the weekly magazine Cambio 16— having just finished a Nieman fellowship at Harvard, where I had organized a big conference on violence in Colombia—we received the first reports of a terrible massacre in a town called Mapiripán.

Right-wing paramilitaries, over the course of five days, had terrorized the inhabitants, cutting some of them into pieces. "I will go," I said. Some of my colleagues tried to dissuade me, saying it was too dangerous. Getting from the capital city of Bogotá, where I lived, to Mapiripán would be a difficult journey and who knew what I would find there? But I decided to go.

What I found there sickened me—decapitated bodies, left to rot in the cemetery, and blood still visible in the dusty streets. Many of the men had been tortured until they died. The bodies that weren't dumped at the cemetery were thrown in the river.

Mapiripán was a ghost town, with the inhabitants initially afraid to talk with anyone. Some days later, though, I had enough interviews to life my story.

But I was left with a nagging question: Why? Why were Colombians doing this to each other? As I was leaving Mapiripán, a very old man without shoes ran to me and said, "Wait!"

"All of my sons are dead," he told me. "Three of them joined the guerrillas and two joined the paramilitaries Perhaps they killed each other." With tears in his eyes, he said, "Please help us Guerrillas and paramilitaries are killing all our children All our future."

All I could say was, "I will try."

That promise to the old man led me to pursue an interview with Castaño. He was considered a monster because of the number of massacres he had ordered — dozens and dozens of them — and the extreme cruelty with which they were carried out.

Over six months, I cultivated contacts. In December 1997, I was finally able to meet with Castaño himself. At that time, Colombia's government had prohibited any and all contact with Castaño while simultaneously offering the equivalent of a million U.S. dollars as a reward for his capture.

I flew to the northern part of the country and then rode in three different cars, apparently without any fixed route, until the driver received a radio signal authorizing our approach. We followed very precarious roads and passed over improvised "bridges" built with only two tree trunks.

Hours later, while surrounded by mountains and streams and gripped by the overpowering mid-day heat, we observed a short, athletic man dressed in a camouflage uniform leading, with a quick step and an inscrutable glance, the 300-odd armed-to-the-teeth soldiers of his personal guard. These troops remained in formation behind him, ready to go off in search of another of the "guerrilla havens" they have sworn to wipe out. "Welcome. I am Carlos Castaño," said the soldier with an energetic voice, shaking my hand firmly and smiling mysteriously.

Our interview lasted almost five hours, with no breaks. During the interview Castaño denied being a monster and rejected allegations that he had committed massacres. "I have performed selective murders, which is very different," he insisted.

Castaño also told me that he had been fighting since the age of sixteen, when he swore vengeance against the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, who had kidnapped and killed his father. To my

surprise, he said that he was tired of the violence and ready to sit at the negotiation table.

I asked Castaño if he did not see himself in the faces of the orphans of his victims, if he did not think that those children were swearing to themselves that they would exact revenge against the paramilitary leader for having killed their parents. Stammering a little, Castaño confessed that this had been precisely the topic of a disagreement with his brother Fidel, the

first known leader of the paramilitary forces.

Castaño said that he had just annihilated the brother of one of the commanders of the FARC when, upon entering the house, they found four children aged three, four, five, fifteen, and seventeen. Fidel told his brother that they would have to kill the fifteen- and seventeen-year-olds because they were in a position to start doing just what Fidel and Carlos did. Nevertheless, Carlos Castaño realized that the same thing could be said of the five-, four- and three-year-olds. "I just couldn't do it," Castaño said. "Of course I saw myself in their faces. There is a great internal contradiction."

This was the first time that Castaño talked so openly about himself and his own conflicts. Castaño also said that he had realized that if this vicious cycle of war continues, in twenty years' time his own children would be killing off the children of the current FARC commanders. He repeated that this was why he wanted to start peace talks as soon as possible. "This war cannot go any longer."

After that interview, which made national and international headlines, I asked Castaño to prepare a document explaining what he wanted to achieve with his movement and proposing the key reforms the country needed for peace. To my surprise, he agreed. He even told me later that he would like to present that document personally at a meeting of representatives of the forces in conflict that I was, in theory, hoping to organize in a neutral country, with the support of some academic and international organizations.

When Castaño told me that he was willing to present a structured peace proposal, I immediately contacted the Cambio 16 interview:
Caballero talks to paramilitary leader

International Red Cross. We also contacted the National Commission of Conciliation, a group of key representatives from different institutions looking for ways to achieve peace. We agreed to at least try to ask all of the forces in conflict for a similar document. All of them said yes.

This sixty-page report, distributed in May 1998 with an edition of *Cambio 16*, was titled "Peace on the Table." For the same edition, I wrote a cover story titled: "So, Why Are They Fighting?"

Their proposals, their dreams for the country were astonishingly similar. In their separate wish lists, all of the players - the assorted leftist groups, the rightwing paramilitaries, the government spoke of land reform, of opening the political landscape for new movements, of investing more in education and health, and of Colombians gaining greater benefits from the country's natural resources. Even the right-wing paramilitaries questioned the value of an unfettered free market. The similarities of the agendas raised an obvious question: Why, if they agree on so much, are they putting a bloody and fiery end to each other?

They are still fighting.

The document is still on the table. The Colombian peace process is complex and turning out to be a long one, affected by many interests and factors such as a presidential election, and now by U.S. plans to dramatically increase military aid, which would potentially also generate risks for Colombia.

But what I have learned personally is that journalism in countries like mine can go far beyond reporting and writing. It's about more than getting scoops. It's about trying to help create an environment in which peace is possible.

Sex, Sports, Beer, Gadgets, Clothes: The Magic and Menace of *Maxim*



axim is a marvel.

Barely three years old, this off-the-wall, in-your-face monthly for young men is rising faster than any other big magazine—by far. Average circulation in last year's second half surged 127 percent to 1,664,000, and will easily

crack 2,000,000 in 2000. At the news-

BY MARSHALL LOEB

Marshall Loeb is CJR's regular magazine columnist, and also a columnist for CBSMarketWatch. com. He was just cited as one of the 100 most important business journalists of the century by a TJFR Business News Report panel of judges. stands, Maxim sells 814,000 copies a month, which is almost double GQ, Esquire, and Men's Journal combined. Ad pages last year jumped 52 percent to 956. And Advertising Age, the bible of Madison Avenue, named Maxim the Magazine of the Year. Well, hooray, but . . .

Maxim is a menace.

We'll say why later. But in any case, *Maxim*'s success is worth examining, for it tells us something about What Works in Magazines Now and, more important, What's Ahead for Magazines.

Maxim is the baby of Felix Dennis, a self-made publisher of eleven British magazines, notably the British Maxim, which started in 1995. His notion was that men's magazines were too stiff, pedantic, and literary, and that a huge hole existed in the market for one with a flippant sense of humor. Maxim did well enough in England, but Dennis figured that the real bonanza lay "in the desert of men's lifestyle publishing" in the U.S. Dennis, fifty-three, who is unburdened by self-doubt, speaks of his American competitors with contempt.

"They don't care about their readers," he said in an interview with CJR. "They care about advertising. They won't let their editors upset the advertisers. They care about only one thing: the return for their investors. Publishing in the U.S. is a corporate game."

And about two specific competitors: "*GQ* is a magazine aimed at men who like socks more than sex. It starts out with the premise, 'If you don't own a two-and-a-half-thousand-dollar suit, what are you doing here?' *GQ* lives for fashion advertisers. Nothing but that. Would anyone disagree with me?

"Esquire is different because it comes from a proud heritage. Esquire is very sad now. It doesn't connect with its readers. It has lost its crusading zeal. Esquire is a corpse walking"

Mike Soutar, thirty-three, the charming Scot who is editor-inchief, says that what distinguishes *Maxim* "is not what we write about but how we write about it. We have a

very specific voice, a very specific take on life, more like a smart, funny guy in a bar talking to his friends."

Maxim has certainly established a distinct brand and a clear identity. Almost all the covers look alike (though

Soutar promises changes soon.) A band dances across the top of each cover and proclaims the six topics on which *Maxim* focuses. SEX * SPORTS * BEER * GAD-GETS * CLOTHES * FITNESS

The right side of the cover is inevitably occupied by the photo of a sexpot, almost always a brunette dressed in black leather underwear or bikini (hard to tell one from the other). The cover's left side is occupied by a big headline proclaiming: SEX! SEX! SEX!

Or (in another issue): HER SE-CRET SEX FANTASY

Por all this preoccupation with sex, Maxim runs absolutely no nudity — because, says Dennis, "if we did, we would cease to have any serious advertisers." So much for his charges that competitors — but not Maxim — would not dare run anything that upsets advertisers.

But the language used by the prototypical *Maxim* writer, that "smart, funny guy in a bar," makes Tony Soprano sound like a choirboy. And the members of his audience would seem to be not the high-class, pacesetting fellows that *Maxim* claims (median age: thirty, median household income: \$62,000) but prepubescent kids smoking cigarettes

(heavily advertised in Maxim) behind the barn door and laughing lustily at Maxim's endless single entendres.

Typical headline and subhead lingo: "Blown Jobs," "Ass-capades," "Brother Puckers" (about hockey-player action dolls).

Typical question in an interview with a hasbeen TV performer: "Do you think becoming a pimp is a good career move?"

Typical advice in a service piece on how to turn on your latest girlfriend: make a Swiss cheese fondue.

Advice and how-to stories go on and on and on page after page. (How to sink free throws, how to persuade your girl to talk dirty to you.) Many of the pieces consist only of the (often anonymous) writer's views, opinions, and counsel.

Some stories are just made-up putons (like the one revealing that shredded wheat is manufactured by impoverished peasants in Ukraine). Many stories about new products seem to be sly rewrites of press releases. It is often very hard to distinguish stories from ads.

Here are the middle-of-the-book features in the most recent issue (April):

- A one-page interview with a mid-level male TV performer who made a softporn movie you never heard of
- An eight-page photo act on two "starlets" (Susan Ward and Lori Heuring) in their underwear
- An eight-page story on a modern Bonnie & Clyde ("America's Most Wanted Sweethearts")
- A six-page act, the product of a staff bull session, titled "30 Worst Albums of All Time"
- A five-page photo act on a littleknown TV personality (Jane Leeves of Frasier) in her underwear
- A six-page service piece on how you can choke, crush, punch, and kick into submission any thug who attacks you
- An eight-page service piece on how to have fun with women
- A six-page story on the most disgraceful events and individuals in the history

of professional baseball (subhead: "The history of our national pastime is a rich tapestry of drunkenness, wife swapping, and synchronized vomiting")

- A seven-page photo act on a littleknown actress (Jodi Lyn O'Keefe) in her underwear
- A sixteen-page adoring photo act on men's clothes, watches, pens, and other things to buy.

The problem with this selection is not its sameness, not its sophomoric tone, not its talking down to readers (who presumably know already how to have fun with women) — no, the problem is that almost none of it involved serious reporting. Almost none of it required going out into the field, not even interviewing real-world experts on the phone. No, if you really wanted to know the answer to that urgent question, "who was the meanest SOB ever to play the game — Ty Cobb or Leo Durocher?," you had to depend on the personal views of one or more members of the Manhattan-bound Maxim staff.

That's a bean-counter's dream, a helluva lot cheaper than doing Reporting 101. No wonder *Maxim* can put out a monthly with 124 editorial pages with only twelve full-time editorial staffers and eleven full-time art, photo, fashion,

and production staffers. No wonder Felix Dennis can — and often does — lecture U.S. journalists that their magazines are grossly overstaffed. After all, you can get by with so much less when you just stare at your navel and pontificate.

What makes this menacing is that *Maxim* has discovered a magic formula for profit without spending much time, energy, or money on what we call journalism. It won't take other publishers very long to discover, and replicate, that formula. Just talk dirty, and the readers (or page-flippers) will come.

Forget all those classic stories that expose scandal or tackle issues or vent important ideas in GQ, Esquire, or Men's Journal. Forget the memorable pieces by Norman Mailer, Tom Wolfe, and Nick Lemann. Can't you just hear those strained conversations now going on in countless magazine offices, as the proprietor admonishes his editor: "Jane, we really don't have to hire that thoughtful writer you want. We don't have to engage that hot free-lancer, either. In fact, we should cut the staff. Lighten up a bit, in every way. And who needs a National Magazine Award? Just look at Maxim . . .

"Maxim is a marvel."

Honoring the Best in Television and Radio News and Public Affairs Programming

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY AWARDS

Entries are now being accepted for the annual Alfred I. duPont Columbia University Awards in television and radio journalism. We invite you to submit entries in the following categories:

- Network Television or Nationally Distributed Cable Programs
- . LOCAL TELEVISION NEWS
- . INDEPENDENT TELEVISION
- . RADIO

To be eligible, programs must have aired for the first time in the United States between July 1, 1999, and June 30, 2000. Entries running longer than two hours must be postmarked by June 15. All others must be postmarked by July 15.

For rules and an entry form, contact:

Alfred I. duPont-Columbia University Awards Columbia University Graduate School of Journalism

2950 Broadway New York, NY 10027 212-854-5974 • 212-854-3148 FAX www.duPont.org duPont@jrn.columbia.edu

NAME

STATION

ADDRESS

CITY

ATE

Exit Polls, Academy Awards, and Presidential Elections . . .



hy does the press have to be such a spoil-sport? In March, *The Wall Street Journal* made lots of people mad. It broke the news of the Oscar winners before the sealed envelopes were opened on Academy Awards night by polling

BY LAWRENCE K. GROSSMAN

Lawrence K. Grossman, a former president of NBC News and PBS, is a regular columnist for CIR. the Motion Picture Academy to ask them how they voted. And during the presidential primary season, Slate, National Review Online, ABCNews.com, and Web gossipmonger Matt Drudge all released or referred to early exit poll data while voters were still casting their ballots. Voter News Service, the exit polling cartel formed in 1993 by the major national news organizations, threatened to sue the online malefactors who broke its exit poll

Exit polls and voter surveys are useful because they produce valuable insights into what citizens think, why they vote the way they do, and which kinds of people vote for which candidates. But given today's instant information landscape, they also can reveal who won or lost long before the voting is over, which is what causes all the controversy.

The exit polling brouhaha first came to a head in 1980 with Ronald Reagan's landslide victory over Jimmy Carter. Reagan scored such a sweep that the networks were able to declare him the winner and Carter even conceded the election hours before the polls closed in the West. Using exit interview data again in 1984, the networks declared Reagan the winner over Walter Mondale, also hours before the polls closed in the West.

People accuse television's early

vote projections of causing voters | to melt away and pass up the chance to cast their ballots for important local races and state referenda and initiatives. Whether that actually happens or not remains an open question. But after the 1984 election, at the insistence of western legislators, the House and Senate passed a joint resolution urging broadcasters to "voluntarily refrain from characterizing or projecting results of an election . . ." based on data from exit interviews "before all polls for the office have closed." Taken literally, that meant asking broadcasters to sit on the news about presidential and other election results until every poll closed in every state, including Alaska and Hawaii. If Congress had its way, thousands of insiders in the press and political campaigns who have access to exit poll results would know who won the elections in each state, while only the public would be kept in the dark, obviously neither a desirable nor a realistic prospect in the electronic age.

In 1985 the presidents of ABC News, CBS News, and NBC News (I was head of NBC News at the time) were called to testify before the House Subcommittee on Elections, which was exploring the idea of mandating simultaneous poll closing across the nation as the way to solve the early-call problem. If all the polls were to close simultaneously and we broadcasters would agree not to release our exit poll data before poll closing time, then the issue of projecting a winner while people were still voting would be solved. The three of us did promise that we would not "project or characterize" election results in any state until after its polls closed. Reluctant as I was to

make any promises to Congress about how NBC News would cover elections, I thought it would be no big deal to agree to wait until the polls close in a state before reporting its election results. That, in fact, already was NBC News policy. What would be the harm of not rushing to air the moment we could make an election projection, if it meant helping the voting process, diffusing criticism about our interfering with voters, and getting uniform poll closing? Since that time, it's generally been considered taboo to release exit poll results while people are still voting.

Our promise to Congress was a mistake that continues to haunt television's election coverage to this day. As H.L. Mencken said, "For every complex problem there is a solution, simple, neat - and wrong." Taboo or no taboo, the commitment we made has never actually been kept. And in the Internet age, it never will be kept. On any given election day, anyone who listens to what reporters, analysts, anchors, and campaign staffs say on the air can figure out well before the polls close who's ahead, who's behind, and how close the race is. The only way not to get an early peek at the voting trends and results is not to turn on any television, radio, or computer.

What the reporters, analysts, anchors, etc. say on the air and on the Internet is influenced by what the exit polls tell them is happening—heavy turnout or low turnout; lots of Republicans voting compared to Democrats, or vice versa; a trend toward crossover voting, or not; independents indicating they're all going one way, or the other. Re-

continued on page 72

... Should Voter Data Be Released? New Media, Old Media Disagree



BY JAMES LEDBETTER

James Ledbetter is the newmedia columnist for CIR. He is editor-inchief of the European edition of The Industry Standard (limL@thestandard.com), a magazine that covers the Internet industry. He formerly was media critic for The Village Voice and is the author of Made Possible By - The Death of Public Broadcasting in the United States.

he 2000 presidential primary season was short, but not without its sparks. Political observers marveled at sometimes nasty exchanges between the four frontrunning candidates, but an equally contentious battle erupted be-

tween Old Media and New Media over the topic of exit polls.

It began with one Web site, Slate, posting exit poll results of the New Hampshire primary several hours before voting booths closed in that state. By March, several Web sites were involved — at least two of which were threatened with lawsuits from Voter News Service (VNS), the media consortium that conducts exit poll research. And while the storm is temporarily over, November's general election is almost certain to revive it.

The exit poll controversy represents the most important journalistic impact that the Internet has had so far this year, and one of the most significant since the Internet came to mass prominence. It is, for starters, a battle that only the Internet could make possible. Yes, radio and television both have an immediacy of delivery like the Internet's. But no single radio station has nationwide reach, and most of the national broadcast and cable television news outlets are signatories to VNS.

Moreover, the battle neatly splits participants along technological, rather than ideological, lines. Slate is a generally liberal venue, but its chief allies in putting out the exit poll data were the National Review's Web site and the Drudge Report — both of which are usually considered right of center. Arrayed against them are the old-line media that make up VNS: ABC, CBS,

he 2000 presidential primary season was short, newspapers.

> The assault on proprietary exit poll numbers is actually a longstanding mini-crusade for Slate editor Michael Kinsley. Back in the early '90s, Kinsley began attacking the major networks for what he considered fraud in their election night coverage: the anchors and reporters all know a set of reasonably predictive data, but won't share them with viewers. In 1994, when Kinsley co-hosted CNN's Crossfire, he accused the major television networks of "self-censorship" when they sat on exit poll leanings for that year's crucial congression-

> The legal issues surrounding the publication of VNS's data are complex and highly contested, but essentially VNS and its attorney have used several variations on the argument that the exit poll data are its exclusive property. Those who published them early disagree passionately. Jack Shafer, the *Slate* columnist who posted the VNS figures in three primaries this year, says: "They tried to assert copyright protection, but these are facts, and you can't copyright facts."

Absent a lawsuit, the legal issues will not be resolved. But more than a few journalists believe that there are ethical and civic obligations that might be trampled by the practice of publishing exit poll numbers early. As Lawrence Grossman discusses elsewhere in this issue of CJR, network executives and members of Congress have for years expressed concern that if television disclosed exit survey numbers before West Coast polls closed, it could make millions of votes irrelevant and discourage westerners from voting at all.

Keeping people from voting is not something that journalists generally want to do. So how do those who published the VNS numbers respond to the charge that they're harming democracy?

"I haven't seen any proof that it deters voter turnout," says Jonah Goldberg, who edits *National Review Online*, which published the results of the Virginia primary in late February, and was promptly warned by VNS lawyers not to do it again. "I don't dismiss the ethical argument. I just don't think much of the ethics of most journalists, so I need more than their assurances. I need facts."

Goldberg has a powerful point: elections don't have control groups, so there's no definitive way to prove that releasing the numbers reduces voter turnout. And then there's the result from this year: in almost every single important primary in 2000, the results of the exit polls were available on the Internet hours before the polls closed. And yet turnout in nearly every contest was up from previous years.

The provocative Shafer takes the argument a step further. "It's not my job as a journalist to help or hinder the electoral process," he argues. "My job's to convey information when I have it. Besides, if that principle is important, what about tracking polls? Every network broadcasts tracking polls right up until the day before the election. Studies show that tracking polls deter turnout, so do we toss those out, too?"

There's another ethical question: VNS spends millions of dollars to collect exit poll data for its

continued on page 72



COLUMBIA IOURNALISM REVIEW

SUBSCRIPTION

PROBLEMS? INOUIRIES? ORDERS?

CALL TOLL FREE 888-425-7782 (888) 4 CJR SUB

Subscribers outside the U.S. may call (614) 382-3322.

CLASSIFIED

JOURNALISM PROGRAMS

"FOLLOW THE MONEY," Deep Throat told Woodward and Bernstein, "It's the Economy, Stupid! "James Carville advised. Take their advice—and study business journalism in NYC. Master the fundamentals. Develop a beat. Study full-time or part-time with expert journalists at Baruch College of CUNY. Fellowships available. Admission Spring or Fall. For information, contact the Master's Program in Business Journalism. 212-802-6640 or Joshua Mills@baruch. cuny.edu

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT NEEDED. CJR's publisher and editorial director seeks a part-time (15 hours per week) assistant to help organize his office and keep track of appointments and schedules. Duties include basic administrative work such as filing, scheduling, correspondence, and basic research. CJR's small staff is located at the Journalism School at Columbia University. Hours are flexible, but would ideally be 9AM to 12 PM Monday through Friday. Interested applicants should contact CJR's associate publisher, Dennis Giza, by phone (212-854-2718), or e-mail (dfg2@columbia.edu).

Grossman

continued from page 70

porters, whose job is to deliver information, are no good at keeping secrets. The news presidents' pledge not to report early exit poll data has resulted in a disingenuous and hypocritical journalistic practice that only muddles election coverage. And the Internet has made the situation even worse.

In the end, common sense prevailed about the terrible idea of uniform poll closing, which would force some states to shut their polls earlier than others. It never even came to a vote. There's only one way to make sure that every voter everywhere, from Maine to Hawaii, has equal access to the polls: follow China's example and declare the entire country a single time zone. No one is about to do that.

Is it really worth making such a big fuss over the fact that voters in California, Washington, Oregon, Alaska, and Hawaii can learn the outcome of an election before they get into the voting booth? AP managing editor Jonathan Wolman told the Los Angeles Times recently that withholding exit poll information "gives people an honest vote

without somebody having characterized that their vote has already been nullified." He's wrong about giving people an "honest vote." On the contrary, we'd be deceiving people if we encourage them to cast their ballot by hiding the fact that the election had already been decided. Why should anyone's vote for president be based on the false belief that their vote will count, if, in truth, one candidate has already received enough electoral college votes to win the presidency, as happened in 1980 and 1984? And if a few citizens decide not to vote for candidates for other offices and other ballot measures simply because their vote would no longer make a difference in electing a president, at least their decision is based on fact not fiction, on knowledge not ignorance. Voters, by definition, are grown-ups. They should be treated as grown-ups and not have information purposely withheld from them just because someone thinks it's in their best interest to do so.

As for releasing the names of Oscar winners before the Academy Awards show begins, now that's a real crime spoiling the suspense for millions of movie fans. Surely, there ought to be a law . . .

Ledbetter

continued from page 71

paying clients. (Exactly how much is a bit of a mystery; for a consortium of media players, VNS displays surprisingly little interest in talking to the media. The spokeswoman for the New York-based group refuses to release even fundamental information about VNS's work, such as the number of paying clients or the cost of polling.) The exit information is private property, and publishing it against the wishes of its owners amounts to a kind of theft.

Shafer has zero patience for this argument, pointing out that the very people who leak exit polls to him and his Web counterparts are employees of VNS partners. "There's an old Chicago newspaper tradition: if you don't want your competitors to know what you're doing, then keep your mouth shut," he says. "I'm not responsible for keeping those embargoes, they are."

And that's the power of Web journalism: it can take what is known among a small number of insiders and publish it almost instantaneously before anyone has a chance to react. Experienced political journalists point out that there is ultimately no way for VNS to enforce silence on all its participants. Some have argued that delaying the release of the numbers until late afternoon, or even a few minutes before poll-closing, would help contain leaks. But that would alienate VNS's print clients, who use the data to plan the next day's coverage.

The most porous elements of the whole exit-poll process are the candidates themselves. As one veteran political writer puts it: "The networks are always going to leak the numbers to campaign officials; TV people trade those figures for access. And the campaigns are always going to leak them to other reporters to get an early spin on the story."

And so, despite the best efforts of VNS attorneys, it's almost certain that one or more Web site or e-mail newsletter will get the VNS numbers for the general election and circulate them. "Politex," the pseudonymous editor who runs the site Bushwatch.com, says he considered publishing the numbers himself, and heard of others who intend to. And the National Review's Goldberg even has a prediction: "I would be amazed if Drudge didn't."

Why Low-Wage Newspapers Are Now Paying a Price



ou'll have to excuse me if I don't shed a tear for newspaper owners and managers complaining about losing some of their best employees to the Internet. As far as I'm concerned, they have no one to blame but themselves. For decades they've

BY ROBERT HOOD sowed the seeds of employee discon-

pert Hood tent, an

Robert Hood (robert.hood@ MSNBC.COM) worked for dailies in Wyoming and Utah. At thirty-five, he is a senior producer/multimedia for MSNBC.com. tent, and now they will harvest a bitter crop.

As I write this, the echo of every newspaper manager I've worked for rumbles through my head, "Well, you didn't get into journalism for the money, did you?" Let me say, loud and clear, No! I didn't. But I also didn't go into journalism so I wouldn't be able to pay the rent. And I didn't go into journalism so my daughter could learn to like the taste of free government cheese. And I didn't go into journalism so I could learn to ignore my spouse's needs and almost go through a divorce. I did all these things while working for newspapers. The worst part is that my story is not unique. It is tragically common in many small and medium-sized newsrooms across the country.

During the '70s, '80s, and early 90s the industry's demand for well-educated employees went up. A Freedom Forum study found that from 1971 to 1992 the industry's employment of college- and university-educated workers rose from 58.2 percent to 82.1 percent.

However, a later Michigan State University recruiting-trends survey showed that even though these new journalists were more educated than any previous group, they faced grim economic realities. They were the lowest paid college-educated workforce in the private sector, with 57 percent of all new journalists mak-

ing less than \$20,000, and 22 percent making less than \$15,000. Driven by the booming economy and the new-media expansion, journalists' pay began rising faster than in many other professions at the end of the '90s, as CJR pointed out in a cover story last summer (July/August). But small and many medium-sized newspapers were not part of that trend, and the latest figures indicate that it may be over anyway.

Please don't misunderstand: I'm not an embittered former newspaper employee with an ax to grind. Daily newspaper work is my favorite work. I believe it is where real journalism is done. I know of no group of people who are more devoted to their work or more willing to make personal sacrifices for the job than newspaper journalists. I'd agree with many veteran journalists when they say journalism, much like religion, is a special "calling." However, that calling shouldn't include a vow of poverty.

I reached a point a few years ago where I couldn't afford my calling. And, as I've kept track of several newspaper friends over the last ten years, I've seen a steady stream of great people leave the newspaper life. They left for the same reasons I did (low pay, awful insurance, terrible hours, burnout). In a perfect world those things wouldn't be so important, and they aren't at first. But as you mature and enter the different phases of life, you realize the job isn't growing with you. I remember thinking that something was wrong with me. I decided to double my efforts, work more hours, and concentrate on quality. But I hit a point of diminishing returns, and after five years I was an empty shell. So, in 1993, with a wife and new baby, I quit my job as

a newspaper photojournalist to go back to school.

Almost by accident, I soon stumbled into the digital news environment at graduate school. I realized right away that delivering news electronically had a huge future; it just seemed so much more efficient than printing a physical newspaper. A new Internet news company offered me a job. I went tentatively to the interview, concerned that I was dropping myself back into the same old environment. However, I found a new culture in the new media newsroom. It was friendlier and more collaborative, and the compensation was better than I'd seen at any newspaper. I felt like a valued employee right away.

I'm delighted with my Internet news job. I believe in the way we tell stories. This combination of text, stills, audio, video, and interactive technology provides journalists with a menu of storytelling options and, for the first time, we can choose the medium that best tells the tale.

There are several other "firsts" at my Internet news job.

- I make a living wage.
- I see my wife and kids every day.
- I have an insurance program that allows peace of mind.
- I'm actually saving for retirement
- I don't dread the future!

Given all that, which is true for many others, it really doesn't surprise me that mid-career journalists are making the jump to online journalism. As they do so, they discover that a journalist's work doesn't have value only in ink and on cheap paper. It has value because journalists make sense of a complex world and turn ideas into something. And journalists discover that when they create that value they can get paid.

BOOKS

Beyond Rosebud

BY RICHARD NORTON SMITH

hen not harassing presidents, or running for president, or demanding or opposing U.S. military intervention, or causing as many scandals as his newspapers exploited, William Randolph Hearst liked to attend costume parties, where he dressed up as a Tyrolian peasant or circus ringmaster. His favorite dish was pressed duck, cooked very rare. An erratic host, he refused on principle to provide guests with breakfast in bed. He was a more than passable yodeler. To Hearst's detractors, all this no doubt confirms the banality of evil. To David Nasaw, his latest and most empathetic biograph-

er, these are humanizing details, part of a vast mosaic fashioned by a meticulous scholar whose industry is equaled by his insights.

Nearly forty years after its publication, W.A. Swanberg's Hearst remains the most famous biography ever denied the Pulitzer Prize, its notoriety of a piece with its protean subject. With the passage of time, however, comes a cooling of passions, not to mention access to papers and a perspective that goes beyond Wellesian caricature. In contrast to today's dully acquisitive Internet tycoons, or boardroom beancounters as interchangeable as the

media properties for

which they dicker, Swanberg's "champion loser of his time" appears a veritable renaissance man. With his movie studios and magazines — in the 1920s one out of every six American households read a Hearst publication — the Laird of San Simeon can lay claim to being the father of modern media synergy.

It's easy to ridicule Hearst; Nasaw, the chair of the doctoral history program at City University of New York, has undertaken the much greater challenge of explaining him. Having plumbed dozens of family and corporate archives unavailable to Swanberg, Nasaw is that academic rarity: a prodigious researcher with a genuine storytelling gift. His tale begins with an appalling set of parents who alternately smothered or neglect-

ed their only child. Hearst's absentee

father, George, was a semi-literate

buccaneer who employed a fortune

based on Nevada silver, South Dakota gold, and Montana copper to buy himself a seat in the United States Senate in 1886. To compensate for her husband's physical and emotional distance, Phoebe Hearst withdrew nine-year-old Willie from school so that mother and son might together pursue a cultural education in Europe.

> Foreshadowing a life whose extravagant appetites exceeded its taste, Hearst early displayed what Phoebe called "a mania for antiquities." These

Hearst en route to Europe on the Aquitania, May 1922

ranged from Venetian glass and German porcelains to the specially bred white horses that pulled the carriages of English royalty. At Harvard, Phoebe supplied a maid and valet to look after her boy and the pet alligator named Charley that shared his crimson-colored suite. Will showed his disdain for Yankee bluebloods by taking as his mistress a Cambridge waitress with whom he spent an apparently happy decade. At the same time, the congenial "Sausalito Bill" sur-

THE CHIEF: THE LIFE OF WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST

BY DAVID NASAW HOUGHTON MIFFLIN. 688 PP. \$35

prised detractors by swearing off alcohol and boosting circulation of the Harvard Lampoon by 50 percent. His studies commanded far less of his attention. Nasaw demolishes Hearst's claim to have been expelled from Harvard for unspecified pranks. In reality, the prodigal couldn't wait to apply the lessons of Joseph Pulitzer's crusading brand of journalism, first in San Francisco, and eventually nationwide.

In a curious role reversal, the younger Hearst issued marching orders to his father ("Stir yourself, daddy pop"), who had purchased the failing San Francisco Evening Examiner to advance his political prospects. On the same day George Hearst took his oath of office in Washington, the name of "W.R. Hearst, Proprietor" appeared for the first time on the Examiner masthead. "We must be alarmingly enterprising, and we must be startlingly original," declared the new publisher. True to his word, baseball scores moved to page one, quickly supplemented by crowd-pleasing reports of boxing, horse racing, and, most notoriously, crime.

Other newspapers had been quick to see lucrative possibilities in human

NEW FROM PENGUIN PUTNAM INC.

"Useful, enlightening, and amusing."*

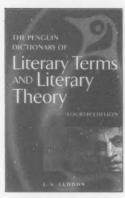


The Penguin Dictionary of American English Usage and Style

PAUL W. LOVINGER

"Useful, enlightening, and amusing, especially when it tells you not only what is correct usage, but what is not, and why." -Edwin Newman.* "The modern guide to sensible and correct usage for almost every conceivable modern uncertainty....This dictionary belongs in every newsroom, editing office, and reference shelf."-Ben Bagdikian, author of The Media Monopoly. From Abide and Abide By to Lay and Lie, this ultimate guide to usage and style illuminates common pitfalls and traps, boldly distinguishing between right and wrong and permissible alternatives. More than 1,000 major entries distill lessons from over 2,000 examples of media misusage and questionable style. Highly readable and completely authoritative, it will answer questions about correct writing for professional wordsmiths, students, and general readers of every kind.

Viking 0-670-89166-5 528 pp. \$40.00 "Generously and urbanely compiled."*



The Penguin Dictionary of Literary Terms and Literary Theory

FOURTH EDITION
J. A. CUDDON

"Some entries accomplish cameo wonders of literary history. Others are funny...generously and urbanely compiled."-The New York Times.* The newest edition of this trusted literary companion covers all aspects of literary theory, from definitions of technical terms to characterizations of literary movements. Geared towards students, teachers, readers, and writers alike, it also explains critical jargon (intertextuality, aporia), schools of literary theory (structuralism, feminist criticism), literary forms (sonnet, ottava rima), and genres (elegy, pastoral) and examines artifacts, historic locales, archetypes, and origins of well-known phrases. Scholarly, straightforward, and entertaining, this is a resource that no word-lover should be without.

Penguin Reference 0-14-051363-9 1,024 pp. \$16.95 From the "Best Online Magazine" 1997, 1998, & 1999*



The Salon.com Reader's Guide to Contemporary Authors

Edited by LAURA MILLER with ADAM BEGLEY

This all-original, A-to-Z guide to 225 of the most fascinating writers of our time is penned by an international cast of talented young critics and reviewers. Here are profiles, reviews, and bibliographies of the authors that matter most now-from Margaret Atwood to Tobias Wolff, Paul Auster to Alice Walker. Also included are essays and recommended reading lists by some of the authors themselves, such as Dorothy Allison on the books that shaped her and Rick Moody on postmodern fiction. Salon.com has won major web awards, including: Webby Award for "Best Online Magazine" (1997, 1998, 1999)*; "Top of the Net"-Yahoo Internet Life (1998); "Best of the Web"-Business Week (1997); "Web Site of the Year"—Time Magazine (1996). Illustrations.

Penguin original 0-14-028088-X 512 pp. \$16.95



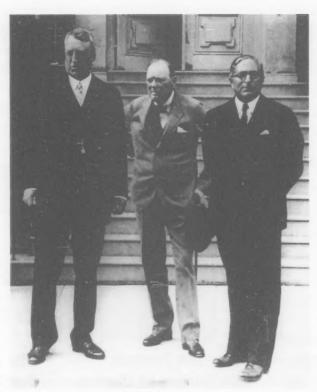
PENGUIN PUTNAM INC.

depravity. But it was Hearst who most profitably treated decapitation, insanity, butchered Negroes, Chinese garroters, opium rings, and capsized steamers as so many urban melodramas. The twenty-fouryear-old arriviste cast his reporters as heroic protagonists and the Examiner itself as an instrument of justice. In such a climate, objectivity mattered less than outrage. Still, one couldn't hope to succeed exclusively on a diet of sensation - even in San Francisco. Hearst prevailed, writes Nasaw, "because he was a master at constructing news from nothing." In truth, he made as much news as he made up. Moving east in 1895, he challenged the fading Pulitzer with a revitalized New York Journal. WHILE OTHERS TALK THE JOURNAL ACTS! the newspaper proclaimed in a rare bit of understatement. One of

those acts was to pirate away virtually the entire staff of Pulitzer's World.

earst's New Journalism upheld the rights of labor, attacked greedy I trusts, and assailed Tammany boodlers even as it inflamed public opinion against those foreigners presumptuous enough to insult Old Glory. For a hundred years it has been accepted wisdom that Hearst and his yellow journals singlehandedly incited hostilities between the United States and Spain in 1898. Certainly bloodthirsty Spanish officials offered a perfect foil for crusading Journal reporters like Richard Harding Davis. Yet the famous telegram ("you furnish the pictures and I'll furnish the war"), which Hearst may or may not have sent, had nothing to do with the splendid little war of legend, but, rather, with an earlier struggle pitting Cuban revolutionaries against their Spanish oppressors. It was Hearst's genius as a self-promoter, Nasaw argues, that "convinced the rest of the nation that without the Hearst press leading the way, there would have been no war."

Ironically the conflict he agitated proved the making of Theodore Roosevelt, whose melodramatic exploits



Hearst with Winston Churchill and Louis B. Mayer on the MGM lot

overshadowed Hearst's simultaneous newsgathering in the shadow of San Juan Hill. Their ensuing rivalry was a bitter compound of envy, contempt, and raw ambition flavored with class warfare. Hearst's Journal attacked TR for wearing pink shirts and a tasseled silk sash. Roosevelt shot back that Hearst was "the most potent single influence for evil we have in our life." When the president coined the word "muckraker" for those guilty of journalistic abuse, no one doubted his target. Characteristically, Hearst played the political game by his own rules. As a New York congressman he loudly demanded enactment of antitrust laws, the direct election of United States senators, and public ownership of the railroads. Yet in his first term alone he skipped 168 out of 170 roll calls.

Ninety years before Ross Perot and Jesse Ventura roiled the political waters, Collier's dubbed the celebrity publisher "the first one-man party to have gained anything like national headway in the history of our democracy." As William Jennings Bryan's self-anointed heir, Hearst finished second in the balloting for the 1904 Democratic presidential nomination. The next year he ran for mayor of New York City where, according to local custom, Tammany fraud narrowly deprived him of city hall. In 1906 he sought the governorship of New York against Charles Evans Hughes, that year's version of a reformer with results. Ever the innovator, Hearst resorted to talking pictures to advance his candidacy, a full generation before Al Jolson gave voice to The

Jazz Singer.

It was all for naught, as TR dispatched Secretary of State Elihu Root ("Root the Rat") to remind voters of the publisher's alleged complicity in the assassination of President Mc-Kinley. Hearst's attempt to form a national third party in 1908 ended in humiliation when his hand-picked candidate, a Massachusetts dealer in axle grease named Thomas Hisgen, finished far behind the Socialists and Prohibitionists. His subsequent diatribes against Wilsonian interna-

tionalism and U.S. entry into World War I earned him surveillance by the War

Department.

The Chief reveled in his notoriety. "Can't you stand an investigation?" he asked an unhappy friend less enamored of official snooping. "I just love to be investigated." What Hearst loved most was to be the center of attention. The burgeoning movie industry afforded him no shortage of opportunities. Practicing the art of buzz long before it had a name, in 1914 he teamed with Pathé Pictures to film The Perils of Pauline, the first of many "novelizations" to simultaneously appear as Sunday newspaper features. Soon after he made the acquaintance of an eighteen-yearold chorus girl named Marion Davies, then appearing on Broadway, appropriately enough, in a production number called "The Girl on the Magazine Cover." Thus did history repeat itself; Hearst's wife Millicent was herself a former showgirl less than half her suitor's age at the time of their marriage in 1903.

Replicating his father's negligence, Hearst showered long-distance counsel on his children, none of whom seemed disposed to take it. His five sons were "mad as March Hares on the money

THE TWENTY-FOUR-YEAR-OLD ARRIVISTE CAST HIS REPORTERS AS HEROIC PROTAGONISTS AND THE EXAMINER ITSELF AS AN INSTRUMENT OF JUSTICE

question," complained Hearst. "These | nincompoops are never satisfied and are being ruined by living far beyond their means and mine." Even as he wrote this, the disappointed parent was preparing to build a 110-bedroom, \$7 million beach house at Santa Monica for himself and Marion. By the twenties he was living a bicoastal existence, his relationship with Davies an open secret. "I started out a g-g-gold digger and I ended up in love," acknowledged Davies, whose film career gets exhaustive treatment in the book. Here, Nasaw gives us too much of a good thing - akin to Marion's fourteen-room "bungalow" on the MGM lot.

illicent, meanwhile, consoled herself with a monthly allowance of \$10,000, a palatial New York apartment, and a Long Island pleasure palace originally built for Alva Vanderbilt Belmont. In the summer of 1927, Mrs. Hearst visited Rome, where she recruited Mussolini to write for her husband's newspapers at \$1500 per article (Il Duce also promised help in finding Italian marble and marblecarvers for San Simeon). The result of his collaboration with a remarkable architect named Julia Morgan, the hilltop principality featured the world's largest privately owned zoo, complete with bison purchased for \$1,000 a head from a Missouri refuge, and reindeer fed on Iceland moss specially flown in until the creatures became accustomed to native grasses.

During a rare visit to San Simeon, Millicent appeared in a home movie directed by her straying husband. One of the title cards said it all:

"The hero has the fattest part And gets the greatest glory But that's because he runs the ranch And also writes the story."

As a metaphor for twenties recklessness, it would be hard to beat the feverish expansion of Hearst's empire, or of Hearst's debts carried by New York bankers. According to his friend Arthur Brisbane, Hearst was the only man he knew who couldn't get along on \$10 million a year. "I am of a promoting temperament," the publisher asserted; any fault lay with his financial managers for not reining in his extravagance.

(When his chauffeur hit a goose on a French road, Hearst fired the man, then presented the animal's owner with a replacement goose - inside a new Renault.) He was equally generous toward postwar Republican presidents. Discarding his theories of municipal ownership, the erstwhile populist embraced Warren Harding and Calvin Coolidge for their domestic policies. He promoted Andrew Mellon for the White House instead of Herbert Hoover, whose internationalist tendencies clashed with Hearst's vehement opposition to U.S. membership in the World Court. But then, Hearst had never trusted the continent whose treasures he plundered with borrowed money.

By 1930, he owned twenty-six daily newspapers. Millions saw his newsreels, listened to his radio stations, or looked forward to regular installments of Krazy Kat, Mandrake the Magician, or the Bumsteads. Frederic Remington drew for Hearst. So did the young Doctor Seuss. Walter Winchell, Damon Runyon, and Hedda Hopper became household names, in part because Hearst compelled editors to take his syndicated features, a practice that forced cutbacks in local coverage and columnists. In place of their former social crusading, Hearst publications now resorted to stunts, contests, and celebrity journalism. The old man telegrammed his editor at the New York Mirror to lav off Gloria Swanson: NEAR-LY EVERYBODY I KNOW IS WEEPING ON MY SHOULDER BECAUSE THE WAY MIRROR ROASTS THEM, CAN YOU NOT GET SOME GOOD-NATURED REPORTERS ON STAFF?

Hoping to garner respectability among readers of "the better class," Hearst fashioned an early op-ed page, then signed up Aldous Huxley, Oswald Spengler, H.G. Wells, Will Rogers, Leon Trotsky, and Adolf Hitler to fill it (unable to meet deadlines, the putative Führer soon fell out of Hearstian favor). George Bernard Shaw's byline appeared sixty times in the New York American ("A Paper for People Who Think") alone. Winston Churchill, another Hearst contributor, visited San Simeon in 1929. He found its owner "a grave simple child ... playing with the most costly toys" who had "the appearance of a Quaker elder - or perhaps better, Mormon elder."



The Language War

by Robin Tolmach Lakoff
"Lakoff is a national treasure.
She is one of the most astute
and knowledgeable linguists in
the country (indeed, in the
world), and one of the few who
turns her analytic eye to the role
of language in popular and
political culture."

-Deborah Tannen, author of You Just Don't Understand
"An excellent book. Lakoff shows that if we do not understand how language is put to work in our world, we cannot understand our world, nor live in it effectively."

-John Fiske, author of Media Matters
\$24.95 hardcover

New in paperback

The Fix

by Michael Massing With a New Preface Winner of the 1998 Washington Monthly Political Book Award \$14.95 paperback

Inside Prime Time

by Todd Gitlin With a New Introduction \$17.95 paperback

At bookstores or order 1-800-822-6657

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS

www.ucpress.edu

As the Depression deepened, Hearst economized by using red damask instead of green Majorcan velvet in the castle's movie theater. He anticipated FDR by calling for a \$5 billion public works program to increase "the purchasing power of the masses." In the 1932 campaign Hearst successfully pressured Roosevelt into retracting his earlier support for U.S. participation in the League of Nations. Unable to make "Cactus Jack" Garner a serious contender, Hearst still controlled enough delegates in Texas and California to play the kingmaker, an option he exercised when Joseph P. Kennedy appealed for his help in securing Roosevelt's nomination. A \$25,000 campaign contribution followed. Once in office, Roosevelt thanked Hearst for the flattering depiction of an activist president in the 1933 film Gabriel Over the White House.

Though remembered today for his diatribes against "Stalin Delano Roosevelt," Hearst was anything but a consistent critic of the New Deal. The shrill redbaiter labeled "the outstanding demagogue of America" by New Masses actually welcomed Roosevelt's recognition of the Soviet Union in November 1933. At other times the aging tycoon

Boxing the Kangaroo

A Reporter's Memoir

Robert J. Donovan

Donovan shares many exciting events that highlighted his stellar journalistic career, from night copyboy to chief of the *New*



York Herald Tribune Washington Bureau and the Los Angeles Times Washington Bureau. His memoir delightfully humanizes each of the five presidents he reported on: Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson, and Nixon.

June, 168 pages, 11 illustrations, \$24.95

UNIVERSITY OF MISSOURI PRESS

2910 LeMone Bouleyard Columbia, MO 65201 1–800–828–1894 WHEN THEODORE ROOSEVELT COINED THE WORD 'MUCKRAKER' FOR THOSE GUILTY OF JOURNALISTIC ABUSE. NO ONE DOUBTED HIS TARGET

wavered between fierce attacks on "the Raw Deal" and shameless flattery of the president whose relations he hired at inflated salaries. Scorned for his union-busting, Hearst became the subject of a boycott by left-leaning progressives like Sinclair Lewis and Norman Thomas; at Amherst, protesting students drowned out a Hearst newsreel, chanting "We want Popeye!" Eventually, Hearst took his name off *Hearst Metrotone News*.

n acute embarrassment to his would-be protégé, Kansas Governor Alfred M. Landon, Hearst at least had the tact to go abroad for much of the 1936 presidential contest. This did not prevent an election-night call from Marion to Hyde Park. "We have been run over by a steamroller," Hearst told the president's son-in-law, John Boettiger, "but . . . there are no hard feelings." FDR was less forgiving. Never reluctant to use the full resources of government to harass his enemies, Roosevelt had already directed Treasury Secretary Henry Morgenthau to investigate the income taxes of both Hearst and Davies. They must have made for interesting reading. Years of financial mismanagement and overspending drove Hearst to seek Joe Kennedy's aid in a corporate reorganization. On her own, Marion sold jewels and real estate worth a million dollars, and insisted her lover accept the proceeds.

"I'm afraid I'm like a dipsomaniac with a bottle," Hearst confessed in a rare moment of candor. As bankruptcy loomed, one financial adviser begged Harry Chandler of the Los Angeles Times not to call in his \$600,000 mortgage on San Simeon. Even FDR weighed in. "Please tell W.R. I advise him to get rid of his poorest papers, to print more news, not to print so many features, keep just the good ones, and to kill his editorial page," wrote the president who had so often felt the sting of Hearst's displeasure. Excluded from the empire he had built, publicly humiliated as his immense collections were auctioned off. Hearst couldn't even secure Millicent a job with Town and Country. Rather than despair, at the age of seventy-seven he began a daily column, scattering like birdseed the contents of his ragbag mind. In the autumn of 1940, he proposed to former Prime Minister David Lloyd George that the two men broker an agreement to end the war then reaching a crucial moment.

Under the circumstances, Orson Welles's brutal dissection of Hearst in Citizen Kane appears less a profile in courage than kicking an old man when he was down. With a gift for self-dramatization that rivaled Hearst's own, Welles goaded Louella Parsons, among others, into a foolish campaign to kill the picture, whose murky brilliance and unconventional narrative did more than anyone in the mogul's employ to thwart its commercial success. Only later did Welles acknowledge "the real story of Hearst is quite different from Kane's. And Hearst himself — as a man, I mean - was very different."

In his final years Hearst campaigned for a Jewish homeland in Palestine, and urged the demotion of George Patton -"that brutal 'kick 'em in the pants' General." Thanks to increased circulation brought about by the war he had so strenuously opposed, in his eighties Hearst was able to regain control of his media empire. As licensing of comic characters like Popeye and Blondie generated fresh income streams, Marion's million-dollar loan was repaid. In May 1947 they left San Simeon for the last time. The once hulking publisher's weight was down to 128 pounds shortly before his death on August 14, 1951. Marion awoke from sedation that day to find Hearst's body gone - whisked away by his sons, who buried the tycoon with his parents in San Francisco, the raucous city he had grown up with, if he ever grew up at all.

Neither apologist nor prosecuting attorney, Nasaw brings to this epic a balance all too rare in Hearst's own publications. By taking Hearst seriously, *The Chief* reveals a man neither beneath contempt nor beyond our understanding. Though hardly the last word on the Yellow Fellow, Nasaw has given us the most credible, comprehensive portrait to date. It will make a helluva movie.

Richard Norton Smith is author, most recently, of The Colonel: The Life and Legend of Robert R. McCormick.

BOOK REPORTS

BY JAMES BOYLAN

THE BUSINESS OF JOURNALISM: TEN LEADING REPORTERS AND EDITORS ON THE PERILS AND PITFALLS OF THE PRESS Edited by William Serrin The New Press. 204 pp. \$16.95

illiam Serrin, a journalist now teaching at New York University, and André Schiffrin of The New Press collaborated in creating this collection of ruminations and reminiscences by rebels who have in common that they abhor get-along, soft-pedal journalism. The seniors are Pat and Tom Gish, owners and editors since 1957 of the weekly Mountain Eagle of Whitesburg, Kentucky. The Gishes have persisted in printing as much of the truth as they can - particularly when it involves the welfare of the miners of their area - and they have survived threats, boycotts, and even arson, and have never missed an issue. Among the others, Ronnie Dugger, late of the famed Texas Observer, looks into corporate domination of journalism; James Warren of the Chicago Tribune tells how he spilled the beans about the big fees star journalists were collecting for corporate appearances; Sydney H. Schanberg, formerly of The New York Times and New York Newsday, calls for unblushing self-examination; the critic John Leonard describes the petty favoritism that runs through so many offices, especially his former haunt, The New York Times. It all shows that some people are never satisfied - and it's good thing.

IF IT BLEEDS, IT LEADS: AN ANATOMY OF TELEVISION NEWS

By Matthew R. Kerbel Westview Press. 149 pp. \$25

decent idea under a hackneyed title: transcribe a bunch of television talk, local news, and networknews programs, line them up together, and go through them minute by minute. That, more or less, was the scheme devised by Matthew R. Kerbel, former newswriter now teaching political science at Villanova. His comment underlines what the transcripts reveal about the silly side of television news—its repetitiousness, pretentiousness, continual self-promotion, appeals to sex and fear, vacuous

feel-good stories, and above all universal gewgaws and gimcracks designed to keep viewers believing that something better is going to happen just after the next commercial. Now and again he offers "rules"—for example, the Fundamental Rule about getting on television: "It is a pretend medium. That means it's okay to tell a reporter you're scared even if you aren't, as long as you keep it to 4 seconds." Or Postulate 26: "When constructing a newscast, try to use the term 'breast implants' as frequently as possible." He has no grand plan for reform beyond, perhaps, creating embarrassment.

TABLOID TALES: GLOBAL DEBATES OVER MEDIA STANDARDS

Edited by Colin Sparks and John Tulloch Rowman & Littlefield Publishers 315 pp. \$24.95

abloid Tales is a heavy-duty effort to sharpen the debate over tabloidization of news - a matter of heated discussion in this whole era of O.J., Diana, and Monica. "Tabloid" has become a term applying not only to newspapers but to any tendency to favor the popular, personal, celebrified, and sensational over the weighty and worthy. The most rewarding portion of this British-based anthology is the extended introduction by Colin Sparks of England's University of Westminister; he deftly summarizes past and present debates over whether tabloidization debases or democratizes the media and society. Contributors also discuss tabloid phenomena in Hungary, Germany, Mexico, and Japan, and there are worthwhile discussions on how journalists reconcile tabloid practice and journalistic ideals, on how the British popular press handled mad-cow disease, and on the century-long history of "the eternal recurrence of New Journalism."

POLITICIANS, THE PRESS, & PROPAGANDA: LORD NORTHCLIFFE & THE GREAT WAR, 1914-1919

By J. Lee Thompson Kent State University Press 319 pp. \$39

fter an old-fashioned hunt through the archives for undiscovered plums, J. Lee Thompson, of Lamar University in Texas, has come up with a worthy reinterpretation not only of Northcliffe, the British press lord (literally, since he was a lord) but also of the influence that he exercised on Britain's war effort from 1914 to 1918. Northcliffe is a kind of parallel to his American contemporary William Randolph Hearst, and that comparison was sometimes made. Born plain and poor Alfred Harmsworth, Northcliffe was as willful as Hearst but was much less frivolous and wielded much more political power. During World War I, he saw himself and his newspapers, especially the popular Daily Mail and the authoritative Times, as bearing a major responsibility for directing the war effort; what's more, politicians paid attention. Northcliffe is credited or blamed for bringing down one prime minister, Asquith, and ushering in the next, Lloyd George. Of particular interest is the account of Harmsworth's tour of America as the British government's gofer, in charge of building support for and procuring American aid; even his enemies conceded that he was an enormous success. Unlike Hearst, Northcliffe did not live on and on; he died unexpectedly in 1922, at the age of fifty-seven.

ATTACKS ON THE PRESS IN 1999: A WORLDWIDE SURVEY BY THE COMMITTEE TO PROTECT JOURNALISTS

Committee to Protect Journalists 435 pp. \$30

his latest compilation by the American-based, American-supported Committee to Protect Journalists reports attacks on journalists in more than 120 countries. (The report skips over western Europe and Japan and barely touches on the United States.) In 1999, thirty-four were assassinated - killed because of their work as journalists and the report goes on to list literally hundreds of other incidents of retaliation against reporters and editors asserting their independence in countries not ready for independent journalism. The situation is desperate but not hopeless, for the report also shows that journalists in hostile environments are establishing their rights by exercising them, much as American printers did when the United States emerged from colonialism.

James Boylan is founding editor of CIR and professor emeritus of journalism and history at the University of Massachusetts-Amherst. Job Seekers: Find a job. Employers: Post your job.



JOBS.COM

www.journalismjobs.com

JournalismJobs.com is operated in association with:

Columbia Journalism Review

The Lower case

Man sold while baby nullifies adoption

Rill

to halt

illness

The (Baltimore) Sun 4/4/00

State Klan leader plans bid for Senate



Times Union (Albany, N.Y.) 12/8/99

The Denver Post 1/3/00

The Millennium Happens Once In A Lifetime

Milford (Mass.) Daily News 12/10/99

Diseased Orange Trees Replaced by Students

Los Angeles Times 2/19/00

9th, 10th graders to attend school

Wentzville (Mo.) Journal 2/20/00

Fish fry benefits National Bum Center

Journal Star (Peoria, III.) 3/8/00

Jeffco limits sex offenders to one per home

The Denver Post 1/25/00

San Francisco Examiner will be sold to free paper publisher

The Oregonian 3/18/00

Police arrest two juveniles after batting elderly woman & her neighbor on heads

Desert Journal (Truth or Consequences, N.Mex.) 1/14/00

Philadelphia police to tow 1,000 cars for 40 days

Tribune-Review (Pittsburgh, Pa.) 3/29/00

CEDE IT'S ® DOMAIN.

In other words, Jeep is a registered trademark of DaimlerChrysler.

